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FREE-WAY TO WRITTEN EXPRESSION.
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TO IMPLEMENT THE PHILOSOPHY THAT GOOD WRITING STEMS FROM GOOD THINKING AND THAT PRACTICE IN PRODUCTIVE THINKING IS A PREREQUISITE FOR WRITING INSTRUCTION, THE ELEMENTARY TEACHERS OF LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA, PREPARED THIS GUIDE FOR TEACHING WRITTEN EXPRESSION IN GRADES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH EIGHT. THE OBJECTIVES ARE TO HELP CHILDREN (1) THINK PRODUCTIVELY, (2) ORGANIZE THEIR THOUGHTS IN WRITING TO FULFILL THEIR OWN PURPOSES, (3) BECOME SKILLFUL IN THE ACT AND ART OF WRITING, AND (4) APPLY WRITTEN EXPRESSION TO THEIR OWN DAILY LIVING. IN SECTIONS FOR EACH OF THE OBJECTIVES, EXPLANATIONS OF THE OBJECTIVES AND RECOMMENDED METHODS, MATERIALS, AND OCCASIONS FOR DEVELOPING THEM ARE GIVEN. SUB-SECTIONS ENTITLED "HAVE YOUR TRIED THIS," FOR GRADES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWO, THREE THROUGH FIVE, AND SIX THROUGH EIGHT, CONTAIN SUGGESTIONS FOR IMAGINATIVE EXPERIENCES TO DEVELOP CHILDREN'S SENSORY AWARENESS, THEIR RANGE OF RESPONSES TO SENSORY EXPERIENCES, AND THEIR ABILITY TO MAKE FINE DISCRIMINATIONS AMONG SUCH EXPERIENCES. SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING THE MECHANICS OF GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION, AND SPELLING ARE INTRODUCED TO HELP THE STUDENT MEET HIS OWN NEED FOR LUCID EXPRESSION. THIS GUIDE, RECOMMENDED BY THE NCTE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW CURRICULUM GUIDES, IS NOTED IN "ANNOTATED LIST OF RECOMMENDED ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY CURRICULUM GUIDES IN ENGLISH, 1967." (SEE TE 000 140.) (MM)

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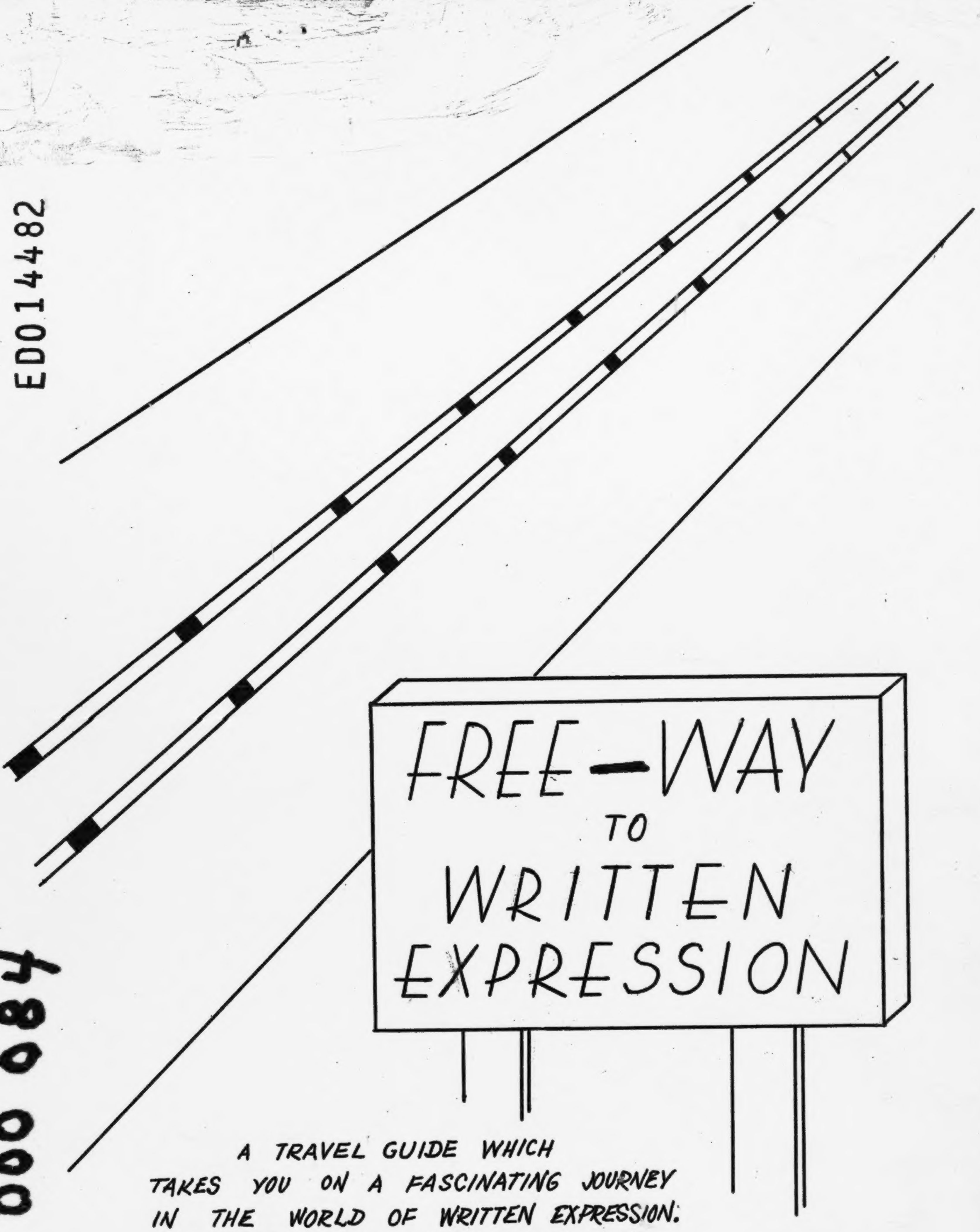

FREE-WAY TO WRITTEN EXPRESSION

A TRAVEL GUIDE WHICH
TAKES YOU ON A FASCINATING JOURNEY
IN THE WORLD OF WRITTEN EXPRESSION.
YOUR TICKET [illegible] AN INDEPENDENT AND
RECEPTIVE MIND.

A GUIDE TO TEACHING
WRITTEN EXPRESSION

To our Staff:

The task of writing a foreword to a guide to written expression would make a poet shudder if he realized the expertness that has developed among this group of hard-working staff members. I want to express the appreciation of the District to them for the unusual contribution they have made.

Dr. Loban's suggestions "to the teacher" provide these quotable items: "Improvement of expression develops best when a learner has ideas he very much wants to write to someone." Our job, as staff members, will be to instill the desire to write and to provide the professional assistance that must follow. Let's do something worthwhile with this guide to upgrade our writing program. This is tentative! It needs your comments, suggestions, and a reprinting when you have added your contribution.

Very sincerely,

Lawson Smith

Lawson Smith
Superintendent

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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LOS ALTOS SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA
JULY, 1964

TE000 084

A REPORT FROM THE CONSTRUCTION SITE

I have just returned from two weeks in the Klondike (room). Now and then I take such brief excursions in order to rub off a little of what may be called the Root-bound Look. This look is quite commonly found among teachers--a wholesome, vacant expression that comes of living exclusively with one's own ideas, of perching unintermittently on last year's lesson plans, like a stuffed, science room owl locked to a dry branch.

But before telling you about these daily trips to the Klondike perhaps I had better offer a general defense of this odd vacation. It involves no more than a few round trips between your desk and the minds of a few other teachers. But I must warn you not to expect a sun tan.

Our efforts to teach writing can often be compared to the imaginary lines generated by Greenwich Observatory and the Equator: both mark merely a bounded sphere spinning parochially in the present moment. To traverse only these same latitudes and longitudes is to pace a narrow plot of real estate. A thousand other meridians and parallels lead back into an estate no less real, into the domain of the rich recoverable experiences of another teacher, and never to follow the gleam of these curves is to limit oneself to a career of semi-immobility. Unless you have found some Rosicrucian connection with the mysteries of teaching writing this travel guide might launch you towards one inglenook other than the common hearth of last year.

No, I do not wish to wean anyone from the delights of a comfortable and tested procedure. I merely suggest the pleasures that lie in living, if only sporadically and superficially, out of one's routine.

In this House of Writing there are many mansions, but why not take out a home-improvement loan. Enlarge that room for written expression. Furnish it with reading and thought, the kind of interior decoration that is essential to the teacher who wants to teach writing. Whenever the world is too much with you unlock its door with your one-of-a-mind key.

Curriculum guides are usually greeted with about as much enthusiasm as a visiting mother-in-law. While this guide is several light years distant from infallibility, there is much to recommend it. It is easy to say that it will be helpful, that it will enlarge you, but difficult to prove in advance. It is less difficult to prove (you'll sense it in short order) that some guides act like a developing fluid on film. That is, they bring into consciousness what you didn't know you knew. Even more than a tool of self-enhancement, such aids are tools of self-discovery. This notion is not mine. You will find it in Plato, who, as with many other matters, thought of it first. Socrates called himself a midwife of ideas. We want this guide to be such a midwife, delivering to full existence what has been coiled like an embryo in the dark, silent depths of the brain.

Another premise behind all that we have said here is that all writing is creative: You need to be something of an artist to transfer ideas, feelings, sights, and sounds into words, whether you are writing a label or a speech or a novel. No matter what form the writing takes, the writer must solve certain problems which are the same whether he is doing a paragraph or a publishable short story. It's always the same: He must know what he is talking about, be able to think it through, organize it reasonably, and then present it with some attractiveness.

This is another way of saying that good writing begins with good thinking. Most writing problems are basically thinking problems. The muddled phrasing, the mixed-up sentences, the badly constructed paragraphs are obvious demonstrations of the confused kind of thinking that created them.

My vacation was enjoyable, just as any trip to a strange land is interesting. We go abroad not for the purpose of making moral judgments favorable to our own country, but to shake off, if only transiently, the all-too-familiar self of use-and-wont. Travel is a way of breaking up habit patterns.

I would suggest that living exclusively with the same set of ideas is a habit pattern, and a dangerous one. The time-bound man, his glazed eyes fixed implacably on the current, is suffering from lockjaw of the imagination. I prescribe for him, as I occasionally do for myself, a brief tourist holiday in the mind of another teacher. Some of them are mighty interesting people.

O. C. Guinn
Member of Writing Team

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To the teacher:

In this guide Los Altos teachers will find a clear emphasis upon the connections between language and thinking. The premise here is that ideas not only undergird writing skills but determine whether or not such skills will be learned at all. Improvement of expression develops best when a learner has ideas he very much wants to write to someone. To fulfill his purpose, he must organize these ideas in order to clarify the relationships among them. Only in such writing do teachers find opportunities to help pupils master the written conventions, one feature of effective writing.

It is a dangerous over-simplification to reduce writing to the conventions of spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization. These are not the true basic fundamentals of composition. This Guide is concerned with success not only in details but in the larger adaptations of the miracle of language.

To be sure, the true fundamentals are much more difficult to establish. Logical organization of ideas, creative thinking, and coherence are less tangible, less easily held before one's attention than conventions like spelling. Yet from purely practical considerations, there is danger in any curriculum based upon a concern with errors. A perspective beginning with errors rather than with a more complete picture of desirable writing seldom reaches really important fundamentals. Pleasure in writing, clear organization, precise and imaginative thinking also enter into the dynamics of language power. Punctuation, for instance, is important but not as important as having something to say and organizing it well in terms of a purpose. Furthermore, such mechanics as punctuation are learned best when taught as important means to even more important ends. Our hope lies not in more workbooks or rules of grammar, but in more genuine communication situations where pupils grapple with their own ideas. Effective writing, then, will involve many skills. Some of them--coherence, or vigorous verbs, for instance--will be more important than many so-called "fundamentals."

The four main headings of this Guide exemplify this position on the importance of writing linked to thought. Teachers using the Guide should note the four headings

We Want Children to

Develop Skills to Think Productively as a Part of Written Expression

Develop Skills in Organizing Written Expression to Fulfill Their Purposes

Develop Skills in Actual Writing

Develop Applications of Written Expression to Daily Living

However, it should be clear that these headings represent a total learning process. A teacher would not work on the first heading for a month and then proceed to the second heading. Although every written activity need not inevitably involve all headings, the majority of them will. Individual teachers will adapt this Guide to their own classes and to their own teaching artistry, for what is described here is a process, not a formula.

Writing is one of the most effective ways to clarify thought. If developing the powers of reason is truly the central aim of education, then writing as presented in this Guide can contribute to that aim. What is well written is necessarily clearly and imaginatively conceived and developed. Our own increased awareness of what constitutes the art of language is among the rewards of teaching it to children.

Walter Loban
School of Education
University of California
Berkeley, California

A WORD ABOUT THE GUIDE--

This Guide to Teaching Written Expression was prepared the summer of 1964 by a group of nine Los Altos teachers (one from each grade K-8) and the curriculum staff. Dr. Walter Loban, acting as project consultant, gave valuable assistance.

A current of philosophy that courses through the guide is that good writing stems from good thinking; and that practice in the elements of productive thinking is a prerequisite for writing instruction.

The sections of the guide have been color keyed. You will note that each major concept I, II, III, and IV is on white. The elaborations of the concepts are on blue. Methods, materials, and occasions for developing the concepts are found in front of the blue sheets on the pink (K-2), Green (3-5), and yellow (6-8) pages titled "Have You Tried This?" The best procedure for using the guide initially is to first read the white, then the blue, and then the sample lessons. Many of the sample lessons are equally applicable at grade levels other than those assigned to them.

This Guide is intended to be a working copy. It now remains for teachers to try out, revise, add to, or discard the ideas enclosed. Contact members of the curriculum staff or the writing team with your suggestions for improvement.

--Writing Team

I. WE WANT CHILDREN TO DEVELOP SKILLS TO THINK PRODUCTIVELY AS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF WRITTEN EXPRESSION

A. WE WANT CHILDREN TO RESPOND TO AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE TO PRODUCTIVE THINKING.

B. WE WANT CHILDREN TO EXPERIENCE GREATER SENSITIVITY TO ENVIRONMENT.

C. WE WANT CHILDREN TO BECOME MORE CURIOUS ABOUT ENVIRONMENT.

D. WE WANT CHILDREN TO TRY OUT A VARIETY OF THOUGHT PROCESSES TO FIND PURPOSE FOR WRITING.

Productive thinking, as here defined, deals with those thought processes which are differentially appropriate for various kinds of problem solving. Written expression is a problem solving experience. We believe that the type of thinking a child does in preparation for writing should be determined by his purpose for writing.

There are numerous constructs which can be used to describe the thinking process. We have chosen a modified version of J. P. Guilford's "Structure of the Intellect" as one which has been useful to us in helping children think productively in preparation for writing.

1. Cognitive Memory: Remembering that which is perceived or understood. It is necessary to understand and retain facts or ideas.

2. Convergent Thinking: Problem solving when only one answer is possible. This is "typical" problem solving with analysis and integration of given data leading to only one correct answer.

3. Divergent Thinking: Problem solving when several answers are possible. There the pupil may generate his own data or take new directions on a given topic. There is no one right answer.

4. Evaluative Thinking: Problem solving in relation to a value judgment. Here it is necessary to define a concept or idea and then decide whether available information does or does not support the definition. It is necessary to set up a value dimension which has to be evaluated before proceeding with problem solving.

The first two types of thinking require the child to understand and remember what he has experienced or to analyze, integrate, or organize these experiences. These kinds of thinking are essential to all kinds of writing. However, they will be used to a greater extent in the writing of factual reports, newspaper writing, recording proceedings at a meeting, or answering many test questions.

The third and fourth types of thinking require children to use information which they have gathered as a jumping off place to do their own original and creative thinking. While these types of thinking could and should be used to some extent in expository writing, they will probably be most useful in all types of creative writing such as poems, stories, original plays, skits, diaries, essays, criticism, and editorials.

A. WE WANT CHILDREN TO RESPOND TO AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE TO PRODUCTIVE THINKING.

1. To stimulate curiosity the physical environment must be exciting. There must be many opportunities for first-hand experiences in and around the classroom, as well as study trips in which the children become personally involved.

   "The school curriculum should be so full of significant happenings, should so draw on its environment, should be so stimulating to all the senses and thus to thought, that ideas will be multiplied and a meaningful vocabulary will be built." --Herrick and Jacobs, Children and the Language Arts, Prentice-Hall.

2. The teacher provides a climate that builds trust and true freedom of expression. The teacher must be a "productive thinker" himself.

   a. Accept the child on his terms, whether he is dirty or clean, nose-picker or thumb-sucker, swearer or polite conversationalist. Then he will trust you and not be afraid to express himself.

   b. Allow children to touch and look at everything displayed in the room. This helps them to be comfortable and feel secure in their school surroundings.

   c. Listen and observe more than talk. Children are allergic to most adult talk. Learnings derived from child-solved problems are often more permanent than those derived from teacher-solved problems.

   Something to remember: Never stop a child in a vital part of a story to correct grammatical error. Individual mistakes are best corrected on a teacher-pupil basis in order not to stifle or squelch the child's free expression.

   d. Returning question for question is often preferable to answering all children's questions outright. Overstreet says this well.

   > Just as the hunter pursues the hare
   > Over hill and dale in weather cold and fair,
   > The captured hare is worthless in his sight.
   > He only hastens after things in flight.

   e. The teacher must be receptive and openminded in order to reduce inhibitions and foster free expression of ideas. Only in this way will the pupils feel free to express their feelings knowing that controversy and divergent points of view are welcomed.

   f. Noise and mess oftentimes are by-products of a free atmosphere and must be accepted in this light. Rather "ordered chaos" than nice, quiet nothing.

g. Be unlimiting and accepting as far as ideas are concerned, for this builds curiosity and initiative.

h. Take time to know your children.

1) All children, some more than others, need individual attention every day and must be "fed" at the time of greatest need. If the child is given this attention, problems in behavior which might occur later in the year may be avoided. This builds security in the classroom and is vitally important in building self-expression. We realize this is difficult with large classes, but try, beginning with a few children each day.

2) Seize each opportunity as it occurs and use it when the time is ripe for learning. This requires a flexible schedule.

"To help children, we must know children. It is hard to understand people who play-act much of the time. Children have learned that it is usually wiser not to be themselves before adults. They have tried it too many times with disappointment.

"A child will no sooner turn out the pockets of his mind to one he does not turst than a shy little boy will turn out the treasures of his trousers pocket to a stranger. He has so many wonderings, questions, fears, and dreams and so few adult friends with whom he can share them."--Mauree Applegate, Helping Children Write, Row, Peterson and Co.

3. The climate for the actual writing experience is also important.

a. Assure students that what they write does not have to be shared with other students.

b. Maintain a quiet atmosphere during actual writing.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades K, 1, and 2

1. Get on the child's eye level by sitting on a low chair. This eliminates the giant versus the elf relationship.

2. Speak the child's own language. Don't talk down to him.

3. Explore the school grounds, office, and other classrooms with your children. Let them become familiar with the entire school.

4. Use the chalkboard and the bulletin board to present material to the children. A "What's that?" display requiring pupils to ask questions will encourage them to be curious.

5. See suggestions for grades 3, 4, and 5, many of which are equally appropriate at this level.

Keep
Moving

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. Display a nonsense object made of simple materials around the classroom to encourage students to say, "What's that?" "How did you make it?" "What can it do?". A nonsense object might be made with straws, construction paper, beads, shells, tacks, and paper clips.

2. The "growing" bulletin board could start with a simple object, such as a rock, and a few leading questions tied in with science or creative writing. For the creative writing you might show a figure doing something with the rock to suggest action or an event.

3. Include Guilford's construct (see p. 27) to relate to a bulletin board display. This could be in literature or other subject areas.

4. Arrange desks in a circle or U-shape with the center space used for displays, demonstrations, panel discussions, creative dramatics, and rhythms.

5. Provide question boxes organized according to subject. These could be contributed to by both teacher and children and worked on by the children during their spare time.

6. Provide a picture file to stimulate thinking. The file might contain action pictures, nature pictures, and children in action.

7. Provide idea files of good titles or interesting beginnings for stories.

8. Supply books, such as Roget's Thesaurus, quotations, synonyms, antonyms, and poetry collections.

9. Set up bulletin boards arousing awareness of the world outside the classroom. This could be contributed to by children from home newspapers.

10. Bulletin boards from which sensory stimuli might be obtained could be set up by students. How about an actual cello surrounded by all the things children can find which remind them of the sound of a cello, such as corduroy?

11. Try Leila Maneely's Language Activity WI-1.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. Discuss with students the importance of learning to express their feelings freely but politely. They should know that controversy and divergent points of view are welcomed. Discuss "tension" and help students realize that being receptive and openminded to the thinking of others will reduce tension.

2. Explain that everyone does not write on the same level, but each writes at his own particular level. When a child shows improvement in his work, praise him. Don't compare a particular child's work with that of others in the class.

3. Read how various authors approach writing. Discuss their philosophies concerning written expression. Discuss how they are similar and how they are different.

4. Invite students to write their biggest accomplishment at home or in school. They may want to bring snapshots of themselves to attach to the written statement. This would be quite effective as a bulletin board display.

5. Allow students to introduce themselves to the class. They may want to tell what their summer experiences were, what pets they have, and how many are in their family. For variety, two children might talk with each other for a few minutes and then introduce one another to the class. Other students will perhaps ask questions.

6. Have a bulletin board display at the beginning of the school year welcoming the students to school. This could be stated, "Extra, Extra, Latest Addition--350 new seventh grade students. Welcome to Blach School." A background of newspaper would be appropriate.

7. Discuss how students can develop skills to think productively. All students do not respond in the same way to any situation. This could be a good way to discuss individual feelings--and differences.

B. WE WANT CHILDREN TO EXPERIENCE GREATER SENSITIVITY TO ENVIRONMENT.

1. We want children to react fully and to develop a greater awareness of what their sensory perceptions can be.
2. We want children to become more aware of others as individuals with feelings, desires, judgments, and a being that is each his own.
3. We want children to perceive more keenly.
4. We want children to discern relationships among details.

As a writer one is bound entirely to facts which have direct connection with sight, smell, touch, hearing, and taste. If you want to talk about anger you can't tell your pupils that a man is angry. You have to show that angry man. See his clenched fists, the veins at his temples suddenly full of blood. Have your children hear his voice. If you want to talk about honesty or love or wisdom you must show a man in love or a man making a decision involving wisdom. Always show the reader in terms of tangible facts that he can see, smell, taste, hear, and feel.

Here is an example of a student who stopped to observe, to think, to ask questions of an object:

> A teaspoon is a utensil for scooping up and carrying small amounts of something, usually food. It has two joined parts: a flat, narrow, tapered handle, by which it is held, and a shallow, oval bowl to dip and carry liquid, food, or other materials. The handle is about four inches long. It arches slightly upward at the wide end. It curves sharply downward at the narrow end. The shape of the handle allows it to fit easily in the hand when it is correctly held. When the bowl is level the handle points upward at the shallow angle. A spoon is usually made of metal or some other hard-wearing, unbreakable material.

". . . it is an easily observed and easily proved fact that the primary sources of language lie in those concrete experiences which provide concrete bases for meaning. The farther the idea is removed from firsthand experience, the more difficult is that idea, the more abstract is the concept, the more difficult is the word to understand."
--Herrick and Jacobs, Children and the Language Arts, Prentice-Hall, p. 322.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades K, 1, and 2

1. Help children bake cookies from a recipe using specified ingredients. Let each child, with eyes closed, smell each ingredient to guess what it is before being added and stirred in. Can you smell the cookies baking? Do they smell "done"? Half the fun of baking cookies is tasting the raw dough!

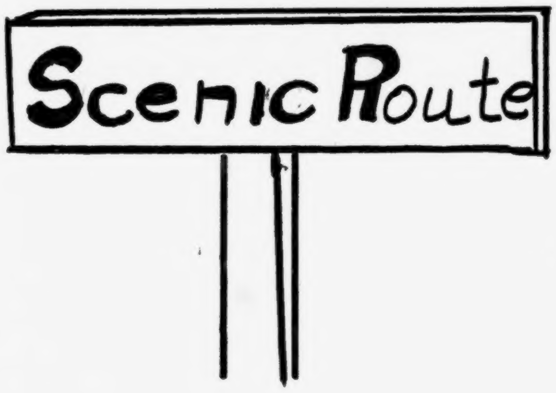
2. Have children taste mint leaves or parsley fresh from the plant as compared to dried ones. How do dry and fresh compare?

3. Encourage children to listen to each other's voices or footsteps to discern whose they are. Identify noises heard from outside.

4. Pass these objects around to your class for them to touch with their eyes closed--damp sponge, popcorn, rough stone, marble, sandpaper, and smooth cloth. Then let children describe what each item "seemed" to be. Suggest that responses can be more imaginative than factual.

5. Tour school grounds at various times during the year. Have children think about what they've seen, heard, smelled, or tasted: bark of a tree, clouds, skyline, construction work being done, and odors new to them.

6. Try Lyona Hale's "Descriptive Games," OP-1, in your Language Activities Notebook.



FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. Help children become more aware of the exact, sequential details of the events interesting to them. For instance, capture the impromptu occasion (a classmate has been injured in physical education class) to recall, discuss, and perhaps record the exact details of the event as reported by the witnesses. Obviously, just arriving at the accuracy of what happened is no easy chore. Have the class write, individually or as a group, an account which would be sent to an insurance company, or to the nurse, or to their homeroom teacher who did not see it. See: L'Engle, *A Wrinkle in Time*; Thompson, *The Cat Stands Accused*.

2. Help the children become aware of the variations in taste perception in a common experience. For example, refreshment time at one of the regular parties might be used to discuss the very sensations and perceptions of taste. Does food taste different on the end of the tongue than on the roof of the mouth? Does food frozen like ice cream taste different in that form than when it is melted and at room temperature? Does sugar taste different in a cube, than in powered, granulated, and syrup forms? This awareness of taste may or may not evolve into an immediate writing situation. Refer to: Godden, *Little Plum*; E. B. White, *Stuart Little.*

3. Help children live a common group experience for the very purpose of helping each student increase an awareness of what he smells. For instance, choose a time when the cafeteria is preparing an aromatic menu. Take a jaunt. Does this smell different at the corner of the playground than at the kitchen door? Another example is when the custodian burns waste paper. This could be elaborated into several perceptions around "Smells of Fire." See: Brown, *Stone Soup*.

4. Help children have a live experience to accentuate the sense of hearing as distinct from listening for meaning. Let the tape recorder help capture and *re-accentuate* a hearing experience. For example, compile a tape of sounds of water right in the classroom. Record these, for example: the water coming out of the drinking faucet head, the water coming out of the regular faucet, the water when someone is washing his hands, the water when a fountain pen is rinsed under the faucet, the water when it drips, and the water when it is turned on full force. Using a general statement like "I heard the water coming out of the faucet," show that it really doesn't tell which sound was heard. Re-play the recording to illustrate. See: Helen Keller, *Child of the Silent Night*; Faulkner, *Melindy's Medal*; Jagendorf, *Tyll Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*.

5. Help children live an experience in tactility. For example, have the children make a collection of fabric samples and remnants. Help them experience how a given fabric, for instance nylon chiffon, feels in the fingers as compared to the way it feels next to the lips, elbows, and toes. Does a small piece of fabric feel different from a large mass of it? Experience the coarseness of burlap, the liquid of velvet. To be a valid part of written expression it need not immediately result in actual writing. See: Louis Braille, *Seeing Fingers*.

6. Help children discern size, shape, color, and texture in objects but also see how these qualities change depending upon lighting, angle of view, distance from the viewer, and other objects with which it is placed. These qualities and changes may never ever be seen by a child unless he is helped to become aware of them within an immediate experience. For example, the children could easily make a collection of balls: tennis balls, beach balls, basketballs, ping pong balls, and footballs. Observe and discuss the sizes, shapes, and textures. Experiment with changes in the perception of these qualities under changing conditions. Which ones does the direct sunlight change most? Does the ping pong ball appear different displayed with the tennis ball than with the beach ball? Experiencing such awareness need not culminate in an immediate writing experience, but it may. Refer to: Lionni, *Little Blue and Little Yellow* and *Inch by Inch*; O'Neill, *Hail Stones and Halibut Bones*; Valens, *Me and Frumpet*; Proysen, *Mrs. Pepperpot to the Rescue*; Campman, *The City Under the Back Steps* and *The Castaways of Lilliput*.

7. Help children understand all the details and elements of situations which come up in class and capture their attention. Often role playing or impromptu skits enacted by other students who were not directly involved can show the facts more objectively and interpret the feelings more positively. For example, one student has claimed that another student has the new ballpoint pen his father had given him just that morning. Two neutral students may be able to portray how this misunderstanding arose. In discussing the facts of the situation not only the two students but the entire class can become aware of the observations, feelings, desires, and judgments of others. The incident accurately seen and understood could become the motivation for a story, narrative account, report, or letter of explanation to the father. See: Woolley, *Ginny and Her Juniors*; Estes, *100 Dresses*; Cleary, *Otis Spotford*, *Mine for Keeps*, *Trouble with Terry*, and *Dan and the Miranda*.

8. To develop sensory perception ask these questions: What sounds do you hear outside our classroom? (Better activity for warm days when windows are open. Of course, don't forget the pat of the first

Give the children time to take them apart, paying particular attention to what they observe.

14. Show a picture to the class. Let the children look at it for a minute. Remove the picture and ask them to list everything they remember seeing. For variation, show a picture in which some details are not a logical part of the whole. Ask them to tell why details are unrelated.

15. Show three related objects to the class--driftwood, sand, and starfish. Describe them in detail and relate them to one another.

16. Have your children close their eyes. Tap a child on the shoulder. The pupil recites a four-line verse. The others then try to guess whose voice it was.

17. Ask each child to make a list of action directions. See how accurately another child can follow them after hearing them once. Increase complexity of directions each time.

raindrops to the clamor of the heavy downpour.) What sounds did you hear on the way to school? What sounds make you think of home? a gasoline station, airport, railroad station, forest, beach? Sounds the children suggest could be listed on the chalkboard. Some of these questions could be asked again for what they see and smell.

9. Arrange a display of objects that have various textures: rough sandpaper, smooth piece of satin, prickly cactus, slimy oyster, soft cotton or fur, and foamy sponge.

10. Arrange a display of various samples of food that are sweet, sour, smooth, crisp, spicy, bland, smoky, greasy, and oily. Record descriptive words suggested by pupils on the chalkboard.

11. Try this assignment: On the way home from school this afternoon see how many things you notice that you have never noticed before, or that you haven't noticed for a long time. Be especially sensitive to changes in people, objects, plants, and animals. Use your nose, your hands, your ears, and your eyes--make use of all your senses. See if there are differences in the atmosphere, in the movement of things, in your attitude toward the world, and in its attitude toward you. Write down as many of the things you have noticed as you can remember. Follow-up question: Which experience impressed you the most? Why? See: Laura Ingall Wilder books; Williams, Island Mackenzie.

12. To develop keener observation try taking a very common object such as a pencil. Ask the children to look at it carefully and tell in words all that they can about the pencil including color, materials used to make it, and shape. Why do you think this pencil has the shape it does? Why is this pencil painted? Is the paint necessary? Why is the eraser on the end? Can you think of a better place to put it? When you have had several discussions of this type about objects, you might want the class to write about things that test one's awareness of the world about him. For example: Do birds stop singing before or after sunset in the summer? Who among your classmates is usually the last one to arrive at school in the morning? Which color does your mother usually wear? What was the color of your teacher's shoes yesterday? What differences are you aware of between a morning in the fall and one in the spring? Let's imagine that the temperatures are the same on each morning. Do you put your right arm through your coat sleeve first, or is it the left one? Does your back door swing away from the house or into it? Why do you think a fork has four tines? Do they all? Do all cups have a handle? Why or why not?

13. Ask each child to bring an old clock or mechanical toy to class.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. Ask your students to describe the feel of sand: Put your foot in it. Pour it through your hands. Throw it in the air. Rasp your skin in it. Try it wet. --Then have your students describe the taste of hot, buttered toast, or the smell of brand-new tennis shoes. Listen to a dog trotting across linoleum. Describe the sound of bacon frying--involve your sense of taste, too.

2. Encourage your students to take a walk after school or over the weekend to try out their five senses. Have students discuss what they saw. Then have them write a paragraph about their experiences involving the five senses.

3. Have your students think of the happiest day of their lives. Write a paragraph or short story showing how the five senses were affected.

4. Take a simple taken-for-granted object like a kitchen match, teacup, wooden pencil, thumbtack, paper clip, or wastebasket. Set it in front of your students. Begin by asking questions about the object: What is this thing for? What, roughly, is its shape? (Eggs and wheels are round, too. Is cylindrical a more precise observation?) Does its use dictate its shape? Could you design a more convenient shape to serve its purpose? What is it made of? Could it be made of paper? What is better? Does the material it is made of have anything to do with its use? Does it have a characteristic texture? A slow bud of admiration should begin to grow once an object or action has been observed carefully. Clearer, more complete writing should follow.

5. Have the class discuss an object--a concrete object such as a desk in the classroom. Try to examine it before you describe it. Proceeding logically from the general to the specific, write sentences describing the object.

6. Discuss with the class how they can become aware of relationships among details. For example, What materials are used in making a desk? Can you think of better materials? Do the materials make the desk functional? Esthetic? Perhaps the class can arrive at designing a desk that would be an improvement over the present one.

7. Have your students write a detailed report on the place where they do their studying. Then have them list the advantages and disadvantages of their study place. Have them discuss ways to improve their study ares.

8. Ask the class to lay their heads on their desks after they have had a few minutes to look around the classroom. Then ask them: How

many chalkboards are in the room? How many children are wearing blue sweaters? Is the teacher wearing a watch? Find out how observant your children are.

9. Ask the class if they see any relationship among the following details: early morning - a bus stop - a husky man - heavy boots - blue denim shirt - clean but stained pants - lunch box.

10. Discuss with your class how they can show that the wind is blowing without saying "it was a windy day." What shows? --Scraps of paper in the gutter. Tree branches in the background. The direction of smoke or clouds. Leaning grass. The ripple of water. The rush of wind around your ears. The sound of wind torturing a shingle. Dust in the air. Now ask the class to write a paragraph about the wind using the descriptions presented in class. When completed, have several read aloud.

11. Inquire and discuss with your students: How do you know that it is a bright, sunny day without telling the reader? Can we show him? Does anyone at the bus stop shade his eyes? Are there any reflections from a thousand things? Then have the students write a paragraph on this subject or a similar one.

12. Write about a boy standing on a street corner waiting for a bus. Don't worry about making a story; do be concerned, however, with seeing him in detail. See if these details fall into patterns. How does he stand? Slouching? Hands in pockets? Head turning one way and then the other? Anxiously consulting his watch? Is he reading a book? Is he leaning on a sign? What kind of sign? Are other people near him? How does the street look? Dirty? Clean? What's behind the boy? Stores? A wooden fence? A vacant lot? What kind of day is it? Cold? Warm? Gray? What sounds do you hear? Horns? Newsboys? When you discuss this scene try writing about it, realizing each student will view it differently.

C. WE WANT CHILDREN TO BECOME CURIOUS ABOUT ENVIRONMENT.

1. We want children to ask questions.
2. We want children to try to identify unknowns and define a specific problem from unknowns.

We should hope if a child is given an environment conducive to productive thinking, he will experience sensitivity and will want to become more curious about his environment.

Given the right atmosphere a child will react with candid honesty. Watch him in a toy shop or any situation where restraints are relaxed. He hasn't the adult's reluctance to wonder, to admire, or to stare without evasion. The child looks at something to learn about it, to understand it. He feels it, talks about it, and stares at it. He doesn't hesitate to ask a question--a hundred questions--even though the questions may seem silly and obvious. Give a child a stone and the right atmosphere and he will learn about the earth, the past, the cataclysms of space, the erosion of ten thousand years, and the endless, silent fall of primordial forests. What a child wants to know about the stone is not obvious even though the stone is. The classroom needs to transfer this natural curiosity into an awareness in the child of his own curiosities.

The teacher's task involved in developing children's curiosity is to create many problem solving situations. Whenever possible let the child define the problem from the unknown. For example, in organizing a collection of rocks, let the children decide in what way they should be categorized.

Read Mauree Applegate, Easy in English, Chapter 3, pages 49-84, "Thinking Makes Sense."

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades K, 1, and 2

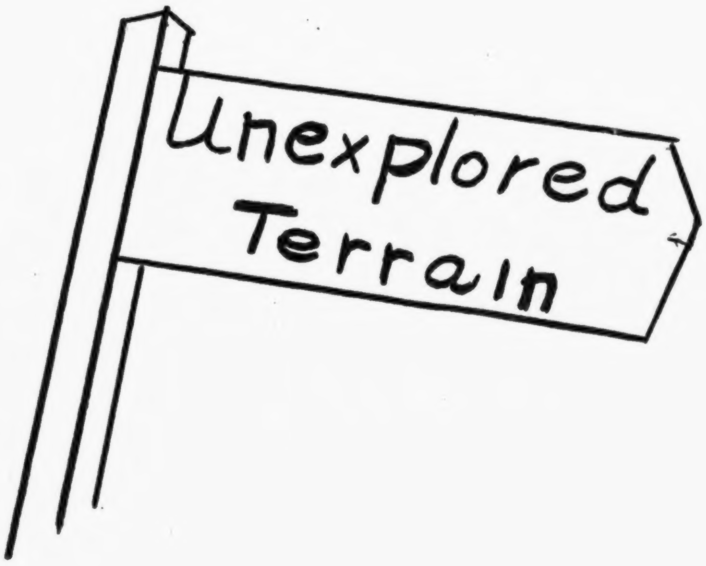
1. Have a child bring a pet into the classroom. Have the class discuss the pet. Perhaps the teacher will write a short description of the pet on the chalkboard--or the class may write a composite story.

2. Bring to class a costume from a foreign country, a party costume, or just part of a costume. Have someone model it. Discuss the appropriateness of the costume in relation to age, climate, season of year, and occasion.

3. Place a piece of machinery on the science table and let the children discover it and ask questions about it. A part of a clock might also be used.

4. Show the children an old rusty key. This and many other objects can open the door to a multitude of questions from which to select *the* one we want to investigate further.

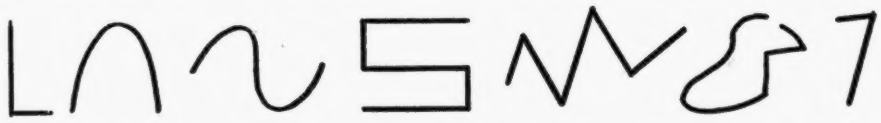
5. Use the "Cupboard of Ideas," pages 78-81, Mauree Applegate, *Easy in English*.



FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. Bring into the class an object that is unknown to your group. The object could be a tool, piece of machinery or anything different that might arouse the curiosity of children. Put it on display. In this type of lesson you want the questions to come from the class. When you display your "curiosity" item, children will perhaps ask "Where did you get it?" "Was it expensive?" Children may want to have their own curiosity time in which they would be allowed to bring or make something unusual. To encourage the written expression, children could write a description of what they see and what ideas they may have for the use of the object.

2. Have your children observe these lines that you've drawn on the chalkboard.

   Ask the children to name objects or things that these lines might suggest. Ask children what describing words are suggested by these lines--graceful, curvy, bouncy, flowing, jagged. The class could write the descriptive words on paper. Discuss feelings these shapes might suggest--joy, anger, happiness, sorrow. Children might want to make their own line and curve drawings and then write about them. Just for fun they could write a story using line symbols in place of word symbols.

3. Set up a "What's Inside" box with clues as to the identity of the contents on the outside. Change its contents according to interests of children or subjects being studied. Later, have children in charge of setting up subjects and clues for the box.

4. Have an "I Wonder Why" discussion period for children to talk about all the things they wonder about. Sometimes let them find the answer right away, if possible; other times let the children look for the answers after the discussion period.

5. The teacher can cut out newspaper headings from a local paper. Ask the children to be detectives and find the rest of the article and write or tell about it to the class.

6. Child reporters could interview their peers, parents, and resource people about things they want to know.

7. After school, take small committee of children to various places they show interest in finding out about. Next day, they can report to

the rest of the class, having satisfied their curiosity by first hand experience. This stimulates other children to visit such places on their own.

8. The teacher might construct a test which provides specific answers but no questions. This is an inverted way of discerning students' familiarity with or understanding of given material. For example, what kind of question might a child frame in a test in fifth grade social studies following a unit on the Pacific Coastal Region if he were given these three answers: Portland, Oregon; Seattle, Washington; San Francisco, California? He could ask, "Which port is on a river?" or "What two ports have natural harbors?" He is required to be more thoughtful with language than simply underlining a right answer.

9. Information reports to the class, to a committee, or in writing to a teacher, class, or unit project are very much a part of the elementary curriculum in content areas. "Why am I interested in this topic?" and "What do I want to know about this topic?" can stimulate a list of questions or sub-ideas. From the list the child can choose one which is appropriate to his purpose for the report. The narrowing of topics can be done also by the class through discussion providing questions and ideas while the teacher records them. For most topics it can be seen that there are enough smaller, specific problems to require the attention of a committee or class. Topics already narrowed and assigned by the teacher can not give this experience to students.

10. The teacher can take children's questions in any area of inquiry (social studies, science, reading) and list them in no particular order on the board. Have the children group them to find specific problems for further exploration.

11. After a field trip, ask the child to write down all the things that puzzled him. In a class discussion, help him to recognize specific problems.

12. Before a field trip, hand each child a slip of paper containing one question he should answer about the place visited. Include questions to stimulate divergent and evaluative thinking, as well as cognitive memory and convergent thinking.

13. A bulletin board of "The Question Family" could help identify the characters in the family, each having the personality of one of the major kinds of questions: cognitive memory, convergent, divergent, or evaluative thinking listed on page 27.

Which kind of question helps keep the home in order?
Which kind of question helps provide the daily needs of the home?
Which kind of question invites friends and relatives into the home?
Which kind of questions stimulates family fun?
Which kind of question helps the family to live with its problems?

The concept, then, is that "The Question Family" live and work together. As children ask their questions during the daily routine and within the context of each learning situation, the teacher may help the children identify these as gifts to present to the Question family. Which family member would most like the question or gift being discussed. For visual effectiveness an empty paper clip box could be gift wrapped with the question written on it and pinned up with the personified family member.

14. A three dimensional seesaw could be constructed from cardboard or light plywood. Blocks, wood, styrofoam, or wrapped empty boxes could stand for questions and answers. As questions come into regular learning situations, an evaluation of just what kind of question it is that is being discussed could be placed on the seesaw. The question could be represented by a certain sized and colored block. Perhaps a question with one obvious right answer would be balanced then by the block representing the answer of a different color but the same size being placed upon the other end of the plank. Other types of questions could be demonstrated by having one question which requires several smaller blocks to balance it.

15. Use the "Cupboard of Ideas," pages 82-84, Mauree Applegate, Easy in English.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. Ask students what curiosity is. What makes a person curious? How can curiosity be stifled by fellow students, parents, or teachers? How can we learn to accept another person's curiosity?

2. When reading a story that mentions a child's curiosity, ask What made the child curious? Where does he go for the answers?

3. Use the "Cupboard of Ideas," pages 82-84, Mauree Applegate, Easy in English.

D. WE WANT CHILDREN TO TRY OUT A VARIETY OF THOUGHT PROCESSES TO FIND PURPOSE FOR WRITING.

We want children to realize that different types of thinking are required to answer different types of questions. Some questions can be answered immediately and simply from personal experience or information the child has heard or read. Some questions need a simple and immediate answer for work to progress. However, some questions which on the surface appear to have only one right answer may have several good answers depending on the data used.

There are some really significant questions which cannot be answered immediately by the teacher, a classmate, or even an expert on the subject, but they can be answered. Other questions may have no answers at all. It is not an easy task to make all children feel comfortable dealing with questions that do not have a definite right or wrong answer.

Still another kind of question requires an interpretation for a given situation or leads to making a judgment based upon observed or collected evidence. Different children will no doubt arrive at different answers to these questions.

Children need help in learning to bring the appropriate kind of thinking to bear on the questions they encounter. Many teachers have found it worthwhile discussing the kind of thinking required by a given question before setting children to work on it.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? **Grades K, 1, and 2**

1. To encourage children to make decisions ask them:

   How do you think you should ask for a turn on the swing?
   Would you like to take the magnet from the science table and see what it will do?
   What can we all do to make Jane happier in kindergarten?
   How did the work time go this morning?
   What are the things you are most interested in learning about?
   How can we choose which ones to study?
   Are these things alike in any way? Should we study one before the other? Why?
   Which one of these titles would you like to write about?
   Would you like to be the boy in this story? Why? Why not?

   Encouraging children to make their own decisions takes infinite time and patience and is not easy, but results are rich and lasting.

2. Use sharing time to develop discriminating thinking in children. Ask such questions as:

   What would you like to know about this?
   What did Jim tell us first about this?
   Can you tell us one thing about your building, picture, or clay model?
   What might happen if . . .?

NO SPEED LIMIT.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. As an experience in using the sense of hearing, the teacher should select a variety of empty containers and a cup of water. Pour the water from the smallest container into the next smallest. Hear what sound it makes. Pour the water into larger and still larger containers. Listen to the difference in sound between a milk carton and a flower vase, for example. After this common experience in "hearing," discuss with the class that a variety of purposes for writing could come from this one experience. Listing the ideas on the board could result in some like this:

   What did we do?
   How did the sound change as we poured the water into gradually larger containers?
   Why was the sound different when the water was poured into the milk carton than when it was poured into the flower vase?

   Purposes for writing about this experience might be:

   A poem about a waterfall
   A factual report about the experience
   A story on

      What I Think When I Hear Water Being Poured
      Waterfall Sounds Make Fountains More Beautiful
      The Waterfall I Would Make in My Backyard

2. The teacher might ask the children to jot down something they did in June, July, and August. Some students may be able to write this in story form, but the main purpose here would be to recall events in some sequential order.

3. Using summer experiences, children can select one particular experience to be elaborated into a detailed description which he could read to the class.

4. As a further step in divergent thinking, the teacher could ask children to write an answer to the question, If you could plan a summer vacation of your own, what would you include?

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. Have your students discuss plans for writing a class newspaper. Discuss with them the different types of thinking required in writing a newspaper. Cognitive memory and convergent thinking require the child to understand and remember what he has experienced or to analyze, integrate, or organize these experiences. These kinds of thinking are essential in newspaper writing. Divergent and evaluative thinking, which require children to use information which they have gathered as a starter for their own original and creative thinking will be helpful for poems, feature articles, stories, criticism, and editorials.

2. Have your students pretend they are visiting from another planet. Ask them to evaluate the people who live on Earth by using this partial list of patented inventions:

   A new vaccine for the common cold
   A hand grenade that explodes into fine hard pieces of steel and is lethal up to 100 feet
   Finger naps for the thumb and index finger--used for eating fried chicken
   A wire device to be inserted in a glass that will keep ice from bouncing against the nose and lips

II. WE WANT CHILDREN TO DEVELOP SKILLS IN ORGANIZING WRITTEN EXPRESSION TO FULFILL THEIR PURPOSES

A. WE WANT CHILDREN TO SELECT A PURPOSE FOR WRITING.

B. WE WANT CHILDREN TO SELECT A MAIN IDEA RESULTING FROM PRODUCTIVE THINKING AND PURPOSE.

C. WE WANT CHILDREN TO EXPERIMENT WITH USING THIS MAIN IDEA IN VARIOUS PATTERNS AND MANNERS OF EXPRESSION.

A. WE WANT CHILDREN TO SELECT A PURPOSE FOR WRITING.

All good problem-solving activities and situations help the child acquire skills of organization. The teacher is the person who is in the position to help the child develop a sense of order and to learn to organize his ideas coherently.

In the primary grades, organization begins with an orderly arrangement of personal belongings and school materials. The teacher encourages children to develop habits of organization in daily activities in preparation for actual writing experiences.

Before children are ready to write they have to see some problem to be solved that will lead them to a purpose for writing. We do an injustice to our children by assuming that every child really sees or feels that his purpose for writing has reason. Some children feel perfectly satisfied with a subject just through discussion and have no desire to express themselves any further on paper. It is extremely important that the child be sufficiently motivated so that he has a desire or reason for putting his ideas and feelings into written expression. The child should be given freedom to find his reason for writing and have a choice of how to express his ideas.

For example, you are studying harbors in the Bay Area. The children may want to know more about specific things regarding the harbor, or they may want to merely express ideas they already have. By knowing their interests and needs the teacher can guide them into putting their thinking into an effective writing pattern.

In the first section of this Guide we have been experimenting with the raw material of writing: thinking. Now, like prospectors with sacks full or ore, we need to take our material to the smelter--to separate the valuable and the useful from the dross.

This analogy holds up for the writer. If you are a good observer, if your mind and memory are well stocked with what your thinking has produced, then you bring your material--all unassorted--to the writing table and to the blank white page, where you refine it and shape it and turn it into a well-made thing. You can't use everything. You choose and discard. You arrange and order your material.

It is about this time that the writer begins to feel the purpose for his writing. One doesn't select a purpose like he selects the firmest head of lettuce from the produce bin. He must realize that his reason for writing falls into one of two rather broad areas: utilitarian writing or imaginative writing.

In utilitarian or functional writing the writer is concerned with making an exact record of events, exploring ideas, and communicating these ideas to others. He is writing for the subtle thrill of feeling that he has actually touched another mind, changed it, and possibly even helped it while the imaginative writer is experiencing the inexhaustible pleasure of exploring the contents of his own mind.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades K, 1, and 2

1. The teacher might approach the class with these questions or suggestions in sequence:

   How can we tell other people about what happened to our pets?
   What are the important things we want to say?
   Shall we make a list?
   Let's write the most important things first.

   Younger children might dictate the information for the teacher to write on the board.

2. The teacher should encourage children to develop habits of organization in all daily activities, including actual writing experiences. Let the child feel that he has a reason for writing. If you're listening to a child tell about his new sweater, you might find this to be the right opportunity for him to want to write a sentence about it. Perhaps he has just lost a new sweater. Then he might write an appeal to his classmates for a quick recovery of it.

3. The teacher can store blocks in a particular place, helter-skelter. When the child understands the shelf picture label, blocks can be classified by size and shape. To help kindergarten children become part of the clean-up activity have them carry five blocks of a certain shape to the shelf while others load certain specific shelves. In this way, a high level of organization has been effected for this age group.

STAPLE, TAPE, OR GLUE YOUR IDEAS HERE.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. Have the class discuss what they did during a certain recess period. Did anything special occur? Did they meet any new friends? What games did they participate in? Discuss how that recess period was different from any previous one. Now explain to the group that a written assignment will not be developed; however, if the class should decide to do one, what would be the purpose? Would it be for just plain enjoyment? To use the imagination? To write a news item? To serve a functional need? Discuss with the students how selecting a purpose for writing is a skill they should acquire in the total learning process.

2. Have the students participate in a debate. For example, the topic might be: Resolved that children under twelve should not look at television more than one hour a day. Set up two teams for and against and have them write out their opinions and facts before the oral presentation. After the debate, discuss how this experience could be used in a written expression. Would this be an opportunity for editorial writing? Would they write advertisements and commercials to sell an idea or item?

3. At the beginning of the day have the children jot down their thoughts and feelings. They may share these thoughts if they wish. Later in the day or the following day have them reexamine their papers to see how and if their thoughts and feelings have changed. Do your children have a reason for carrying this assignment any further? If so, talk with them about selecting a purpose for writing. Will they write a sentence or two to learn to know themselves or others better? Perhaps they want to know if other children have the same thoughts and feelings.

4. To develop self-expression in poetic pattern read poetry to your children. It's a wonderful way to help children feel the beauty of a word or descriptive phrase. It gives them ideas of how they can express themselves. Mauree Applegate states in Easy in English: "Children should talk and write out their fears, wonders and thoughts --they are often sheer poetry." Show your students that selecting a purpose for writing might be to feel the beauty of a word, or to express themselves in verse.

5. The teacher might introduce a topic such as: Who changes language? Materials may be provided and contributed by students and teacher to show examples of language changes. As each is contributed discuss, Who made the change? Why was a change needed? Will the

change last long? An example might be the article in a Weekly Reader (1963-64) about the new word "chunnel" for the tunnel which is being constructed under the English channel. After questions have been discussed the teacher might suggest a cumulative bulletin board to add materials as they are brought and discussed. Eventually the students might see that changes come about because of changes in situations. In the Panamanian situation the difference in the meaning of "discuss" and "negotiate" was pointed out in one news article which said the Spanish word for both was the same. Could your students select a purpose for writing from this topic? Perhaps they would be interested in research work? A news article about class discussion, an appeal to fellow students to keep the language as it, or perhaps a poem to show nonsense words?

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. Show students the film, Developing Imagination (County M578). Let them discuss how imagination can be stifled or developed by classmates, teachers, or parents. The film shows a small house with snow blowing against the porch. The narrative poses the question, "How would you like to add to the story?" The students might decide rather than to write about this scene they prefer something that originated with them. Perhaps they'd want only to discuss an ending rather than write about it.

2. At the beginning of the year have your students introduce themselves to the class. As they talk you might ask questions such as: What do you remember most about your previous home? What do you hope to accomplish this year? How can you make other pupils feel at home in this room or in school? From these introductions you and your students learn much about each other. You might ask the class what types of things they would like to do with what they have learned. Perhaps this would lead into writing autobiographies, short stories, or articles for the personality column of the newspaper.

B. WE WANT CHILDREN TO SELECT A MAIN IDEA RESULTING FROM PRODUCTIVE THINKING AND PURPOSE.

As stated before, "Productive Thinking," as defined in this Guide, deals with those thought processes which are differentially appropriate for various kinds of problem solving. Written expression is a problem solving experience. We believe that the type thinking a child does in preparation for writing should be determined by his purpose for writing.

Before a child experiments with using various patterns of written expression, he must select a main idea resulting from productive thinking and fulfilling his purpose for writing.

From the total learning process, selecting a main idea is one procedure glossed over or not understood by students. Selecting a main idea limits the topic and defines the individual's thinking and purpose for writing. For example, your class discusses Christopher Columbus. You want to limit the topic by having your students select a specific problem to solve. Perhaps it is: "How did Columbus show persistence in obtaining money for his voyage?" Delimiting the topic even further, the student might arrive at this main idea for writing: "What qualities of leadership do you believe Columbus possessed?" Here the student might develop such ideas as persistence, courage, curiosity, and sense of adventure.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades K, 1, and 2

1. The teacher might try these types of questions to help children find the main idea they want to develop or investigate further:

   Tell us one thing about your building, . . or picture, . . or clay model.
   What's the most important thing about this story?
   What was the most exciting thing for you on our trip, your family's weekend excursion, dinner at Ming's, or Jane's birthday party?
   What is it we want to tell you about our pets?
   Did that same experience ever happen to you?
   What do you think will be the outcome?
   Does this remind you of another story you read?
   Can this information be applied to another situation?

2. After the teacher reads a story to the class the children might dictate words and phrases important in the story for the teacher to write on the board. They might discuss which words give the main idea of the story.

ONE
WAY
ONLY

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. Teachers are aware that children need guidance in writing special reports. Pupils get lost in "thinking too big" for what they are to record on paper. The teacher should show students how to write the main idea in a sentence or two. Usually the child wants to start from the beginning and retell the entire story in his own words. Why not read a simple story to your class? Then discuss the story. What things would you like to remember about the story? Is it important to the action or development of the story? Which words would you use to describe what occurs in the story? What are some ideas brought out in the story? What do you consider the one main idea of the story? Can you write one sentence telling the main idea of the story? Write several sentences on the board using suggestions from the class. Now write it as clearly as possible. For some groups of children, you may want to follow this procedure several times before they do a report independently.

2. When a child says: "I am going to report on insects," he is taking on quite a large task. Help the child pursue one main idea pertaining to insects or an insect, such as, "The Eating Habits of Grasshoppers." He would have a better chance of understanding one concept rather than jotting down so much information he doesn't understand. Here the teacher can be helpful in reading information to the class and asking them to pick main ideas from the reading.

HAVE YOU SHARED YOUR OWN GOOD IDEAS WITH OTHER TEACHERS IN YOUR SCHOOL OR DISTRICT?

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. The teacher might try these types of questions to help students find the main idea they want to develop or investigate further:

   What are the key words in this paragraph?
   When writing a research report what directions should you follow?
   How is this paragraph organized?
   Is there a solution to this problem?
   What were the motives of that particular character?
   What is the author's point of view?
   How does this idea compare with what we read in the previous selection?
   How can this information be used?
   What would you do in a similar situation?

2. Instead of learning rules about nouns and verbs for the purpose of just learning rules, introduce the topic of linguistics for discussion to find out what students really want to learn. Jot down on the board questions they have. Select one question or problem for development. What is the main idea? Some main ideas might be expressed in this way:

   How is a noun made?
   Do English words have precise meanings?
   Is my English teacher a good example of how to use spoken English?
   How many uses does a dictionary have?
   Where do grammatical rules originate?

   After the student selects a main idea resulting from productive thinking and fulfilling his purpose for writing, he is then ready to experiment with using various patterns of written expression.

3. In learning to be more accurate and precise in stating a central controlling idea have the students work with precision in the choice of words. Writing a definition can be a brief but challenging pattern of composition because it demands precision. It necessarily brings up the question of which word or phrase to use. Have a student write a sentence on the chalkboard to show the word in context first. Then let the class work out a definition that satisfies the meaning of the word in the given sentence.

C. WE WANT CHILDREN TO EXPERIMENT WITH USING THIS MAIN IDEA IN VARIOUS PATTERNS AND MANNERS OF EXPRESSION.

When a child feels the purpose for his writing and is able to select a main idea resulting from his productive thinking and controlling purpose, he is ready to experiment with using this main idea in various patterns and manners of expression.

We want children to know that:

1. Some writing requires that they record accurately what they know or perceive.
2. Some writing requires them to combine what they know and can perceive with what others have known or perceived to report upon a topic.
3. Some writing gives them the freedom to fabricate, to extend beyond the known or perceived, or to make suppositions.
4. Some writing requires that they make decisions or judgments based upon what they know, what they can perceive, what they can learn from others, and what they feel.
5. All writing must convey or transfer its ideas in relation to the writer's purpose.

The child's problem now is: What must his writing *do* to produce the desired effect? What does he want this piece of writing to *be*? Just what is the purpose of this piece of writing?

Let's go back to the example about studying harbors in the Bay Area. Some children want to know more about specific things regarding the harbor, while others just want to express ideas they already have. By knowing their interests and needs the teacher can guide them into putting their thinking into an effective writing pattern. Some children may want to experiment with using their own main idea by writing a poem or a short story. Others may want to write letters to the Port of Authority, Ferry Building, San Francisco, to seek such information as: "How many ships came into San Francisco Harbor last year?" A few more may want to write letters to local newspapers or to the Governor expressing ideas about our harbors. The important thing is that children should be able to experiment in expressing themselves in more than one pattern of writing.

We want children to experiment with using this main idea in *various patterns*, such as:

1. Word arrangements
    a. Phrases

   - b. Captions
   - c. Titles
   - d. Vivid word pictures

2. Sentences

3. Paragraphs

4. Story forms

   - a. Mystery
   - b. Animal
   - c. Outdoor
   - d. Fairy tales
   - e. Legends and myths
   - f. Biography
   - g. Autobiography
   - h. Diaries and journals
   - i. Cooperative stories and books

5. Poetry of all types

6. Reports

   - a. Personal experiences
   - b. Research
   - c. Critical reports
   - d. Outlines

7. Plays

   - a. Puppet shows
   - b. Radio and television scripts
   - c. Scroll movies
   - d. Children's film strips

8. Newspapers

   - a. News writing
   - b. Features
   - c. Editorials
   - d. Advertising
   - e. Human interest stories
   - f. Reviews
   - g. Headlines

9. Essays

10. Invitations and letters

11. Greeting cards for special occasions

12. Note taking

13. Telegrams

We want children to experiment with using this main idea in various manners of expression. Writing must have an effect. This effect is usually emotional, moving the reader to recognition, sympathy, laughter, fear, nostalgia, passion, or pleasure.

For example, assume that your class is describing a student government meeting they have attended. Here are various manners of expression your students might experiment with:

1.	Satire:	You want to indicate that this is a stupid council. There is something synthetic, pretentious, and painfully foolish about it.
2.	Humor:	You want to show the ludicrous elements of the meeting--the skinny boy trying to be dignified, members unfamiliar with parliamentary procedure, and the funny kinds of things that can come up for discussion.
3.	Compassion:	You want to illustrate the fundamental goodness of the group, the good will, and the real striving, and the real failure of the striving.
4.	Ridicule:	You want to express the stupidity of simple-minded activity of the group. Comparison is made with a "higher" level of government in order to make the group look small and cheap.
5.	Dispassionate objectivity:	You want to present an almost photographic report of the scene as you objectively observed it.

The task of the creative writer is to select those elements or happenings in a scene which produce most sharply the effect he desires. So we return to the question: "What do you want your writing to do?"

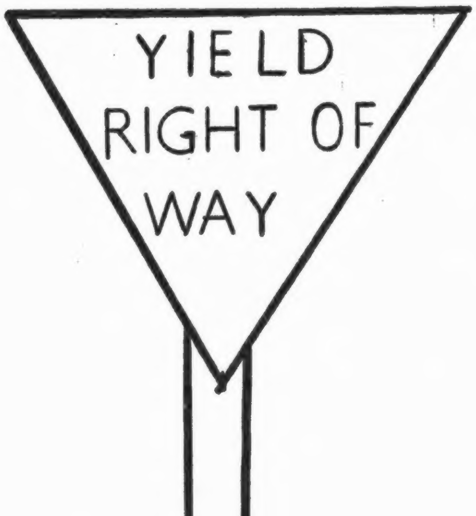
FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades K, 1, and 2

1. When your children have decided on a main idea that they want to express in writing, you might suggest these: (The main idea, or central controlling idea, being that John, a fellow student who is ill and will not return to school for another month, is missed by his classmates.)

   How shall we say what we want to say?
   Shall we draw a picture with hames and important words on it?
   Would John like a poem from the class?
   Let's write John a weekly letter.
   Why can't we make a get-well card?

2. Take a story you have read to your children and have a few of them discuss the story--almost as a panel would do. Then have the group write a similar story using their own characters and scenes. Show how a play could be created from the new story. From this could develop an actual skit or puppet show.

3. Try unusual forms in expressing ideas: a daily log, a diary, cartoons, movie and radio scripts, and a scroll story.



FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. Take any story a child has written and help him to put it into poetry form. Then show how a play might be created from his story.

2. Show the variety of patterns poetry may take by reading examples. Have children take the same idea and express it in a limerick, unrhymed free form, or haiku.

3. Present the same idea in different news forms: feature, advertisement, and human interest story.

4. Combine patterns for certain writing, such as a letter to a friend in poetic form.

5. When writing a book report have the child imagine being one of the people involved in an event and write about the happenings in a diary or daily log form.

6. Try using one object for many patterns of writing. For example, a starfish might be written up in science as a research report, in social studies as a chart item of "Sea Life on the California Coast," in creative writing as an experience in "How I Would Feel if I Were a Starfish," or as a news article.

7. Read the folk tale "The Three Blind Men and the Elephant." Discuss what it might be like to be blind. What might each child think if he were blind? Discuss what each might think if he were a blind man feeling an elephant for the first time. At this point some children might want to write their own feelings about their touching the elephant. Then pose this question: What would you "feel" if you were a blind child coming to school for the first time and the teacher asked you to sit down at your desk? Allow children to close their eyes and "feel" all parts of the desk. Some might smell it. Others might tap different parts to see what sound they make. A small group then might plan a brief oral skit. Put a desk in front. Have them select a teacher and two or three of the blind children from their own group. Portray what they might do and say. Perhaps this then would lead into a collectively written story patterned after the folk tale. By dictation the teacher writes the beginning of the story on the board. Then each one writes what his comment about the desk would be. The comments might be read to the class for fun or taken as they are and dittoed into the class story of "The Blind Children and the Desks."

H6

8. Choose a class mascot--donkey, pony, turtle, or dog--and display a picture of it on the wall. Every week make up a new adventure for your room pet and display stories and illustrations around the large picture. You might try adding clever captions for the pictures. A cooperative story might be written and bound by the class.

9. Invite a child from a lower grade or another class to come to your room to tell a story. Have the class discuss the story and then ask them if they would make any changes or additions to it if they were going to tell the story to another group. Perhaps they will suggest a different pattern to express the story.

10. To learn more about other classes at your particular grade level write letters to children at other schools in the District. As pen-pals they will probably want to tell each other about school activities and may want to include some of their school work.

11. The teacher can exchange children's papers with those from other classes and grade levels within the school. Some might be kept in a folder; others might be displayed on the bulletin board. You might like to read some of them to the class.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. Read to your students how one central controlling idea has been experimented with in various patterns by well-known authors. One author has taken the main idea to be used in a short story, another through the novel, and still another as a magazine editorial. Discuss with your students that when a person feels the purpose for his writing and is able to select a main idea resulting from his productive thinking and controlling purpose, he is ready to experiment with using this main idea in various patterns and manners of expression.

2. Suggest on the board three or four words and let the students weave a story around them. Have several read to the class. Then select one of the original stories and read the first paragraph or two to the class. Next have the students complete the story themselves. Or, select a story and read the ending to the group. This time have them write the beginning and the body of the story. For another pattern try using the same three or four words and write a title for a story, use vivid phrases to describe the words, write a myth, write a news article, try a few lines of poetry, or send a telegram.

3. Select four pictures and have the students write a paragraph or short story including ideas from all four pictures. Use the same pictures, or select others, to write sentences, a paragraph, a radio script, a feature article for the newspaper, or a mystery story.

4. The class might plan a program of any subject unit. In order to publicize the program one group could write advertisements and draw posters. Another group might plan the written program including a number of written patterns. The entire class might compose a letter of invitation to the principal and the parents. Finally, a review of the program might be written for the room or school newspaper.

5. Here's an imaginative approach to book reports--if you believe book reports are necessary:

   Pretend you are a character in the book and tell why you are important to the plot.
   Make a series of pictures with captions and use them to explain the book.
   Have outstanding passages read from the book and have children comment or write about them.
   Write a first-person account of a scene.
   Write a story using another person's book title. When completed, read the book and tell the class the difference in the two stories.
   Read and compare two books on the same subject. Discuss the differences and similarities of the two--plot, treatment of the subject, types of characters involved.

If you have ever tried to pick up a blob of mercury, you have a fair notion of how hard it is to free students from the familiar form of the prose essay. The following four examples retell the story of Humpty Dumpty while using four different forms. They may help spark a student's imagination toward experimenting with form.

Oct. 27, Los Altos, Calif.

H. T. Dumpty, prominent hatchery magnate, was severely injured while attempting to retrieve one of his prize hens from the top of a stone wall near his farm home last Tuesday. Dumpty sustained a slight concussion with multiple fractures and was rushed to El Camino hospital by ambulance after the mishap occurred. He was found by a neighbor identified only as Mr. King who was working with his men in an orchard nearby. When they were unable to render assistance they called the ambulance and placed him in care of the hospital. Relatives were notified.

From PRAVDA (official news organ of USSR)

Oct. 28, Los Altos, Calif.

H. T. Dumpty, notorious capitalist and controller of laboring classes in a poverty stricken American town, was injured when he fell from a stone wall. Dumpty had climbed the wall in pursuit of a nickel that had fallen outside the confining walls of his opulent country estate. A number of his capitalist friends arrived on the scene in a drunken stupor, fresh from a Negro beating party, (a wanton misuse of workingmen's funds) but were unable to assist. A Dr. King was able to give some assistance by utilizing a Russian mudplaster, a medical export from this country. Dumpty was full of praise for the advanced medical research indicated by the Russian mudplaster.

THE TRAGEDY OF HUMPTIUS DUMPTIUS

Dramatis Personae

Humptius Dumptius:	a good egg
The King:	a ruling monarch
The King's Men:	a motley crew

Act First
Scene I (Enter Humptius)

Humptius: Forsooth. Thinks me I see a wall worthy of sitting down upon. Aye, this wall doth be worthy of sitting. Ah, so fair a day is this . . . such a sky; 'tis deeper blue than the wing of yon bluebird. The clouds provoke love in the depths of me; the --- Oops! Methinks I might loseth my footing upon this stone construction. 'Twould be a distasteful --- whoops!

(Exit Humptius off Wall)

(Loud crack is heard.)

Enter King, followed by King's Men
(Flourish)

King: Halt! This be a pretty spot for the banquet. Prepare for the feast . . . bring forth the bundle of victuals prepared for the hunt . . . you there, minstrel, play music, entertain. All make merry! The hunt has been heavy with success.

(eyes fall upon Humptius)

King: Stop! Cease all jubilance! Who be yon fellow not amaking merry? You, sirrah, I proclaim that we shall make merry! Whil'st we be happy thou art sorely despondent in appearance.

Zounds! He is abroken up! Heartily there, men . . reinstate him to his former stature . . . reaffix his accoutrements!

(Men Attempt King's Bidding)

King: Ah, good thee friends . . . it is to no avail that we hearken to raise the spirit of this one. Truly, his soul has departed from his fellow's presence. This was the noblest peasant of them all . . . his life was gentle and all the elements so mixed in him that all Nature might stand and say to the world: "This was a good egg."

Exuent All

From Paul's Letters to the Dumptians

Chapter I

1. And it came to pass in the days of the reign of Tiberius Caesar that there was to the north of the city a stone wall.
2. A certain Simon Dumpti, on a holy day of fasting, went up unto the wall to fast in hiding.
3. And the wall being stone and shewing much of the hills and rivers unto Dumpti pleased his eye. And he sat upon it.
4. When forty days and forty nights had passed hunger wrought a great weakness upon Dumpti.
5. And lo, in his weakness, Dumpti did tumble from the wall.
6. And it came to pass that the prophets and the scribes found him in pieces numbering four score and six. And they mourned his transgressions saying:

7. Simon Dumpti was a good egg
Simon Dumpti came to great harms.
A fall from a wall broke both of his legs,
His yolk, his shell, and his arms.

USE THIS PAGE TO JOT DOWN YOUR OWN IDEAS

III. WE WANT CHILDREN TO DEVELOP SKILLS IN ACTUAL WRITING

A. WE WANT CHILDREN TO WORK OUT A PROCEDURE FOR ORGANIZING AND EXPRESSING THEIR IDEAS BOTH BEFORE AND DURING WRITING.

B. WE WANT CHILDREN TO FEEL THE MAGIC OF WORDS.

C. WE WANT CHILDREN TO SENSE THE POWER OF EFFECTIVE WORD ORDER.

D. WE WANT CHILDREN TO JUDGE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WRITTEN PRODUCT.

A. WE WANT CHILDREN TO WORK OUT A PROCEDURE FOR ORGANIZING AND EXPRESSING THEIR IDEAS BOTH BEFORE AND DURING WRITING.

To help children develop skills in actual writing, the teacher should assist them in working out a procedure for organizing and expressing their ideas both before and during writing. The teacher should help students write imaginative experiences. To show them that poetry is a satisfying means of self expression begin by capturing a personal experience, then give meaning to an abstract idea, and finally present the information in a refreshing way. Other imaginative experiences that teachers should help children organize and express are the story and dialogue. Help children to enjoy making up and telling their own stories, and let them discover that dialogue is basic to dramatic pattern.

Help students work out a procedure for writing reports. Help them to:

stick to a point
sense that the reader understands only what the writer explains
outline the sequence of main ideas
pick out the main ideas which need the fullest explanation to put over his point
try a beginning--middle--ending, or introduction--explanation--conclusion

Help students to work out a procedure for letter writing. Have them learn to write a friendly letter in such a way that the letter takes the place of a visit. Show them how to write thank you notes, invitations, and brief explanatory notes which stick to the purpose. Inform them that a business letter requests or gives information so that a certain matter can be taken care of.

Help children to write effective paragraphs. Have them experiment with patterns of order in ideas limited to a narrow topic or purpose. Students can be taught to recognize the paragraph as a forceful part of a central purpose.

When the child is in the upper elementary grades he should assume responsibility of working out his own procedure for organizing and expressing his ideas both before and during writing. This procedure could be discussed by teacher and students as a suggestion:

record ideas in a rough draft
edit and rearrange ideas
write completed copy
proofread

Students should know what manuscript forms are acceptable in the classroom. Most English textbooks include a page or two on correct form, legible handwriting, and checking the mechanics of writing. Discuss this material with your class and arrive at an acceptable form. Perhaps the teacher should mimeograph this information for each student to include in his school binder or English folder. Writing the proper manuscript form on the board or more permanently on a bulletin board will make the students realize how important it is to follow a definite procedure. Not necessary, you say? That's for you to decide. Many teachers have found, however, that after reading fifty, one hundred, or one hundred fifty compositions they find it very economical of their time for students to use one, acceptable manuscript form.

Explain to your students that they will find good variations from time to time in the patterns of written expression. For instance, you might pick up a magazine containing an executive's letter and note that the signature is on the left side. Our textbook has the signature on the right side. One day you might discover a more meaningful or logical location for it. Suggest that the placement of the executive's signature came about because of the return carriage on the typewriter.

Give students the security of what you expect, but let them know that next year's teacher might have different requirements. Should they feel that they have something unique, let them know that you will accept it if it truly lends more to the total pattern.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS?

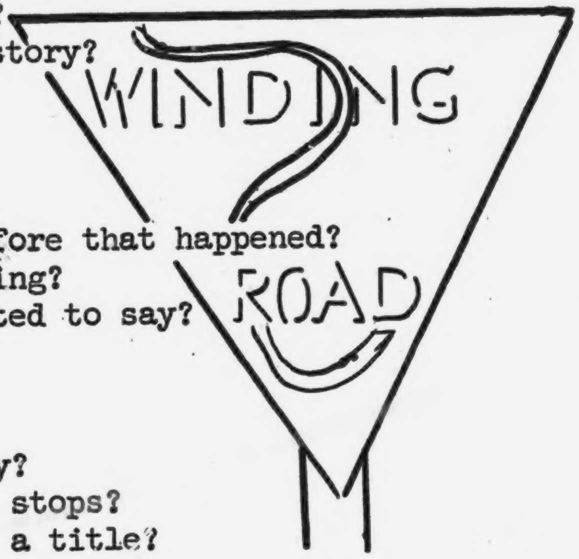
Grades K, 1, and 2

1. For children to learn the concept of beginning, middle, and end the teacher can use these questions:

Beginning: Who can begin?
What shall we say first?
How shall we start the story?
Where do we begin?

Middle: Then what happened?
What happened next?
Did something happen before that happened?
Have you left out anything?
Have we said all we wanted to say?

End: What happened last?
How shall we end it?
Who can finish our story?
Is this where the story stops?
Shall we give our story a title?



2. Ask one of the men on your staff to come into your classroom to read a story or several poems to the children. Having another person read to the group is not only pleasurable, but it also gives them a different voice and set of mannerisms to hear and watch.

3. Have the child who has not yet learned to write or who has great difficulty putting his ideas in written form "write" a scribble story on the back of his picture. Then have the child "read" his story to you or the class. As the child "reads" his story, the teacher can record the story and say, "This is how the story looks in real writing." Even though the children realize their scribble stories are only make-believe, many children have been observed to be more fluent in telling their stories if they pretend to be reading them. This technique is also effective in alleviating the frustration in some children who are impatient to learn to read and write.

4. Have older children or parents come and act as scribes for dictated stories, or have children record their stories on tape.

5. Have your class write a cooperative story. Translate group experi-

ences to written expression on the chalkboard and then on paper. Explain the procedure you think the class should use. Try a beginning, middle, and ending to the story. What is the main idea being expressed? Afterwards, have the children not only read the story to each other, their parents, and the principal, but also help them see that a definite procedure was followed.

USE THIS PAGE TO JOT DOWN YOUR OWN IDEAS

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. To emphasize the concept of beginning, middle, and ending, the teacher might take ten statements from a story and write them on the board. Discuss the statements and what actions they express or convey. Put the statements in sequence to show the action of the story. Next, have the class write a story using the ten statements. Have several students read theirs to the class.

2. Have your class work out a procedure for writing letters. Explain to them that an effective friendly letter is written in such a way that it takes the place of a visit. Have pen-pals with children within the room, other classes in the school, other schools in the district, or other places throughout the United States or other countries. Read outgoing and incoming letters to the class occasionally. Have a bulletin board display of letters, and include a map to locate where the letters originated. Perhaps you will include pictures of pen-pals.

3. When children are actually writing give them enough time to get their ideas on paper. Don't interrupt their train of thought. Silently jot down requested words on the board or on individual slips of paper for the child to copy. Plan with your class certain guidelines to keep in mind as they write their ideas:

   What do I want to tell?
   How do I want to say it?
   Am I including everything I wanted to say?
   Am I keeping the action in logical order?
   Am I expressing my thoughts clearly in complete sentences?

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. Help children to record ideas in a rough draft. Let them know that the first thoughts are difficult for even a master writer. The puzzle is how to start. The first thoughts are often your best and are sometimes the quickest to be lost or dissolved. The "scratch paper" is how you capture them. Simply scratch these ideas down in any form. This is not the place to worry about spelling or even completion of words. If you can easily remember that you meant "skate board" by writing "Sk B" that will be ample at this beginning point of your writing.

   Let them know that the scratch sheet is a personal thing; they have the security that it will not be graded. Let them know, however, that the scratch sheet is an organization process worth using. It might be wise from time to time to focus on a brief lesson in scratch sheet recording. Has anyone in the class developed methods that might help others to capture their first thoughts more readily? A student bulletin board might help to give ideas--this collective ideas approach may help them to transfer and gain ideas for quickly recording their first ideas.

2. The teacher should discuss a procedure for organizing and expressing ideas both before and during the actual writing. A suggested procedure might include:

   Record ideas in a rough draft
   Edit and rearrange ideas
   Write completed copy
   Proofread

3. Some questions the students might ask themselves both before and during the actual writing are:

   Are the facts I choose relevant to the subject? That is, are they commensurate with the size or aspect of the subject? Is an image too overblown, too strenuous for the mild aspect of the fact? Do I say "colossal" when I really mean "fairly large"?

   Are the facts I choose necessary? Are these facts so necessary that a scene or character would be crippled without them? The piece of writing should be so tight that you can neither add nor delete anything without spoiling it.

   Are the facts you choose probable? Given the other elements of your subject, are the facts likely? Would this action likely happen as a result of that one? Is the climax of a series of actions a natural result of what has gone before?

Are the facts you choose dramatic? Do your facts show things or tell them? Which would be better for the creative writer to say:

She is on a diet, so she didn't eat the chocolate candy that was passed to her.

or Susan took the candy plate with a smile, but inwardly she yearned. Chocolate creams, slick and sweet in the centers, fudge centers, thick and creamy beneath their chocolate jackets. Her eyes hungered after the plate as she passed it to her neighbor. "No thank you," she said.

4. Decide with your students a manuscript form that will be acceptable in the classroom. The District does not specify a definite form to be used. Here is a suggested heading you might discuss with your class:

Student's Name	Subject
Teacher's Name	Date

Title (on top line)

skip a line before beginning the first paragraph

B. WE WANT CHILDREN TO FEEL THE MAGIC OF WORDS.

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean--neither more or less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master--that's all."

--Through the Looking-Glass

1. Children need to get excited about words and what they do.
2. Words can be used to produce lively actions, vivid descriptions, sparkling conversation.
3. Word meanings:
   a. Words have meanings attached to them because of the way we have tended to use them.
   b. Words which have exact meanings help us to say what we mean.
   c. The meaning of a word is sometimes linked to the way it looks or sounds.
4. Some words are vague and overworked.
5. Language is constantly change, therefore, experimenting with changes can be fun.
6. Look for the gold in the ore we dig from the dictionary!

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades K, 1, and 2

1. Help to stimulate interest in words by focusing attention on new words the children say or hear, including funny and nonsense words, and their meanings.

2. Experiment with the sound of words--rhyming, opposites, synonyms, and homonyms. Kathy writes, "We drove our car down a long, windering road." Ricky said, "I saw ugs and ugs of bugs."

3. Read rhymes, riddles, and poems to children for pleasure.

4. At chart story level, slip in extra words, with the children's permission, of course! Ask the children for descriptive words to aid their thinking.

5. Make word pictures to describe music.

6. Write a descriptive phrase and illustrate it. For example, "a noisy little pool" and "squishy, squashy mud."

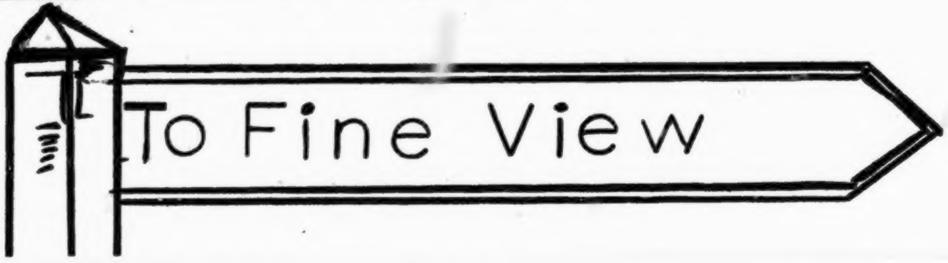
7. Act out descriptive phrases--"a billowing white cloud."

8. To get rid of vague or overworked words say: That's a tired word. Let's fine a peppier one, or more active one.

9. Have a classroom "safe" or "treasure chest" in which to place favorite or new words and expressions. Read the "treasure words" to the class occasionally.

10. Have children describe objects or conditions with as many descriptive words as they can think of without actually naming them. Have the class guess what you're describing.

11. Refer to: Starters for Enrichment Activities in Communication, Richmond, California, School District, pp. 53-56; Guidelines for Creative Writing, Jean Ullyette, pp. 21-27.



FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. Give each child a piece of paper with a picture of a fruit they know attached to it. Better yet, have them bring some fruit from home. Have the children suggest words to describe the looks, the smell, the feel, and the taste of fruits generally. After discussing the words, ask the students to write about their fruit in as many good sentences as they can using the "best" descriptive words for their particular fruit.

2. Take a word such as "walk." Have the children think of some other words that tell more vividly how a person walks, such as strides, saunters, limps, runs, staggers, strolls, and struts. These are fun to do in pantomime with children guessing by the way a child walks which word best describes his manner of walking.

3. Think of action verbs that could be used accurately in describing each of these:

   a large river in time of flood
   a gentle wind on a pleasant day in the country
   the traffic during rush hour
   an airplane taking off
   a terrible windstorm

   Have the children pick one of the phrases to write a description or a story.

4. Think of all the words you can that describe how a person feels, acts, looks, and thinks. Name the person described after the list is completed.

5. At the beginning of each month ask the class to think of all the words they associate with that month. Keep the list posted to suggest topics to write about for the month.

6. Ask children to suggest sentences. Experiment with substituting one word for another one already there to show how word choice changes meaning.

7. Experiences in creating vivid word images, tone color, and play on words provide the children with ideas for poetry and descriptive writing.

8. Have a contest to see who can build the most synonyms or antonyms

from any noun, verb, or adjective. Encourage the use of dictionary, Thesaurus, books of quotations, proverbs, antonyms and synonyms when children have exhausted their own speaking and reading vocabularies.

9. Children should understand that some words have a slant and direction just like a playground slide. They let the thoughts and reactions of a reader or listener slip straight into a certain landing spot. These are discussed as connotations at the upper elementary grades. Such words might be *average* (coldly factual) and *mediocre* (derogatory), *hate* and *dislike*, *puny* and *tiny*, and *fib* and *lie*. Some words make our thoughts spin like the merry-go-round. The words just in themselves arouse a set of images and happenings, such as *gale*, *mighty* and *cottage*. Construct "A Playground for Words." Have some of the class engineers build a three-dimensional playground slide from a home erector set. Pipe-cleaner figures could be made, each carrying a flag with one of these words that have a slant. Newspaper headlines might be one source for children to draw from. Readings and their own shared writings also should not be neglected. The engineers could also make a playground merry-go-round and the pipe-cleaner figures here would carry word-flags of words that make our thoughts spin.

10. The dictionary may be a gold mine, but too often the student is the miner who drudgingly digs out the raw ore never ever seeing the precious mineral he ships to the teacher. The teacher should set the example of repeatedly turning to the dictionary for a better word or to check the precise meaning of a word used rather than turning to it solely when words aren't known or their meanings are debated.

11. Children should understand that some words sound like what they mean. *Twinkle* means twinkle and *galloping* means galloping. The class might compile a *Room Thesaurus* of words that ARE what they mean. They could group them as to words that actually smell, taste, sound, feel, or look what they mean. They could be used as a reference source for children when they write. David McCord's poem "Take Sky" in his book *Take Sky* illustrates this idea well.

12. Children should understand that alliteration in making choices can contribute to the rhythm and meaning in poetry, and it can be used effectively for humor or persuasion in advertisements. These are truly words with wings. The class may write original advertisements for a mock TV program using the trick of tickling the listener with repeated letters.

13. Let children experiment with playful blends in words like *slanguage*,

monoskate, politricks, and visualtorium. Write some original humorous verse using some of these playful blends.

14. Have children recognize when clipped words like phone, TV, and pro are appropriate. Discuss some of these clipped words common to our speech. Often they cluster around the home, school, business world, and sports. The class could meet in smaller groups with a common interest in one of these clusters and write a dialogue of a skit using either seriously or humorously some of these clipped words. Each group could present its skit to the class.

15. Have children use common words in a new context. Make up a dictation exercise using the easy spelling words in strange contexts and see if the students' spelling proficiency has elasticity.

16. Children should understand that suffixes and prefixes learned in reading may help form words which state ideas exactly or freshly. Arthur Guiterman's poem "Eletelephony" might stimulate some fun rhymes or statements experimenting with prefixes and suffixes.

USE THIS PAGE TO JOT DOWN YOUR OWN IDEAS

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. Write a sentence on the board for students to make more vivid by the addition of descriptive words. Have some sentences read to the class.

2. Write a sentence on the board describing a character from a story. Have the class expand the description of the character with words until they have a clearer and more vivid picture of the character. Then have the class use vivid words to write a character description of a friend or relative.

3. Have children write original jokes, riddles, and cartoons to show play on words, sounds and meanings, and homonyms. Display some of them on the bulletin board.

4. Children should be aware that intensives like very, too, and much and the comparative and superlative of some adjectives and adverbs like awfully and nice are overworked. Try a bulletin board with two large bicycles, one having the broken and twisted spokes of these worn out words and the other having sturdy, glistening, new spokes of better words. Over a few weeks the children themselves could contribute to both from either their own writing or their reading.

5. Children should be familiar with words that have been contributed to our language from other contemporary languages. As a comparison, you might explain that the French have incorporated such words as drug store and weekend into their language.

6. One approach to learning the meaning of words is Dr. James Burns' master key to vocabulary:

   detain
   intermittent
   precept
   insist

   monograph
   epilogue
   aspect
   uncomplicated

   nonextended
   reproduction
   indisposed
   oversufficient
   mistranscribe

   These roots, prefixes, and suffixes as used in these words will help students understand many words. Help them to understand that prefixes give direction to the words, roots of the words are the basic part, and suffixes show how the word is used.

7. When a student has difficulty understanding the definition of a word have him try to arrive at its meaning through context clues, either from the sentence or the paragraph. Several times during the school year have a review of words and context clues by listing five or ten words on the board that many students have had difficulty in using. Let them write sentences using these words in an intelligible way.

8. Have your students examine a dictionary. Read the table of contents to the class. Read the preface and find out what information is available in the introductory matter. Explain what types of information are found in the main body of the dictionary. Have the students realize there are many types of information to be found in the appendices.

9. Children might like to study terminology used in sports or the professions when there is a tendency to lean toward formal and technical verbal study. For example, students could make a list of common words with different meanings that are used in baseball: rabbit ears, bucket, blue garter, squib, goat, rhubarb, squeeker, and rubber arm. They might also compose a list of common expressions, such as "He thinks like an ice cube," "He pulled a Piersall," and "He runs like a duck." American English is composed with excerpts from every field. No vocational field is barren of its own esoteric terminology.

10. Have students realize that words can be "translated" into other words which are neutral or have a different connotation, especially if they represent opinions or attitudes. Write two lists of words on the chalkboard and label them negative expressions and more positive expressions. For example:

Negative Expressions	More Positive Expressions
must	should
lazy	can do better when he tries
troublemaker	disturbs class
stupid	can do better work with help
stubborn	insists on having his own way

Have the class write sentences showing how words do influence the meaning. Have a skit showing how the use of connotative words can influence thinking.

C. WE WANT CHILDREN TO SENSE THE POWER OF EFFECTIVE WORD ORDER.

Skills in using effective word order are refined as the individual child progresses from kindergarten through the eighth grade.

WE WANT CHILDREN TO:

1. Recognize and use complete sentences of all types. Discriminate between sentences, fragments, and run-ons.
2. Write sentences in a clear style. Show variety in sentence structure.
3. Present one main idea in a sentence or paragraph.
4. Make use of vivid and exact language.
5. Be aware of the importance of spelling and grammar in clarifying word order. Write legibly.
6. Write a good beginning sentence and a good closing sentence in paragraph writing.
7. Develop an orderly sequence of ideas in the paragraph through the use of specific details, examples, facts, or reasons.
8. Practice the use of transition words.
9. Include interest-holding material. Action is kept moving so the reader's interest is maintained.
10. Realize the title of a selection offers the first chance to catch the interest of the reader.
11. Understand the idea of climax and suspense.
12. Establish a sense of time and place at the beginning of the story or composition.
13. Introduce characters and actions naturally and smoothly.
14. Control description by using space as a method of organization.
15. Enliven description by using specific details to create sensory impressions.
16. Discern when an idea requires contraction or expansion.
17. Sense the power of effective word order in all patterns of written expression.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades K, 1, and 2

1. Help the child build a "sense" of sentences by saying, Tell us one thing about your trip. If he says only a word or two try to build several other words around it in order that a sentence is developed. Repeat the sentence to the group.

2. Help to develop sequence or natural order by asking such questions as: Tell us the first thing that happened on your trip. . . . the second thing . . . . . . and what was the last thing that happened on the trip?

3. On chart stories point out that the period means "stop." The story has said one thing.

4. Have the children draw a sequence of three or four pictures to tell a story--similar to a comic strip. Tell, or write under each picture, what happens first, second, next, and last. Another example is to have the teacher write three or four sentences in sequence and have the children illustrate them. After rereading, they can give the story a title.

5. Try to expand sentences by adding meaningful phrases, such as "the sun is shining" expanded into "the sun is shining on the glimmering blue water."

CONSTRUCTION
DRIVE
CAREFULLY

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. Have the children write a description of what they are wearing including shoes, sweater, shirt, dress, or trousers that is suitable for use in a clothing catalogue. Be sure to answer questions about material, style, color, and size. You might show examples from catalogues. Have them write clearly, but not necessarily in complete sentences. Now rewrite this description including some words or phrases intended to persuade the catalogue user to buy the item.

2. Write a sentence on the board such as "John is a happy boy and plays every day with the boy across the street." Now ask the children to rearrange these words so that the meaning remains the same, but the order has been changed for variety of structure. For example, "John, a happy boy, and the boy across the street play every day." Have children make up sentences of their own and rearrange them.

3. Have the children read to themselves these four sentences you have written on the chalkboard:

   I reached for the light.
   The shadow suddenly disappeared.
   Crash! A sound awakened me.
   A small shadow appeared on the wall.

   You may want to have a discussion about the sentences or you may want the children to arrange them in sequence on a piece of paper. These four sentences offer a good beginning for a story. You might suggest the senses that are aroused and then have the children write.

4. Have the children read a story. Then introduce the simple outline, both word and sentence outlines. Show the procedures to follow in outlining. This is helpful in getting children to see that stories do have some natural beginning, middle, and ending. In expository writing, also, children should begin to see that a general plan or outline beforehand will enhance their writing.

5. Discuss what a good beginning of a story might include. Does it make you want to hear more? Does it set the stage for further action? Then ask your students to write only their story beginning. Then review the questions you asked earlier. Children may wish then to edit or change their beginning before continuing to the remainder of the story.

6. Keep a box of plot situations or opening sentences for students to

use as suggestions for writing.

7. Let children exchange stories and write different endings, beginnings, or titles for the one they receive.

8. Read a paragraph to the class. Help them discover that a paragraph has a topic sentence, developing sentences, and a last sentence. Then list several places, objects, pictures, or persons on the board. Let children select one to use in a paragraph.

9. Let children make planning and organizing charts dealing with different phases of arranging a class party, field trip, committee activity, or program. Have them make a summary chart when the activity is completed.

10. Put several words in groups from different articles from the Weekly Reader. Have the children write a brief summary of the news article using the words in context.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. Have students list all details they want to include in a sentence or paragraph. From the list try to select those details that will help to create a single effect--one main idea. For example, the student has just won an all-expense paid trip to the New York World's Fair and he's very much excited. Now write a list of details that will help to create this single effect of excitement. Discuss the details and select those which will be used in writing a paragraph.

2. Students should unify narrative paragraphs by using topic sentences. (Although the narrative paragraphs of adult writing often do not have topic sentences, at this level it helps students to control their ideas.) Write several titles on the board. Have students develop a topic sentence from the ideas and then compose a paragraph as a class project.

3. Discuss the types of sentences--declarative, imperative, interrogative, and exclamatory. Write sentences about your favorite television program using the four types of sentences. Discuss the end punctuation used with each sentence.

4. Show variety in sentence structure by using inverted order, introductory there, and verbals. As an example, write this sentence on the board: "Across the yard ran the big black cat." Show other ways of writing this sentence:

   The big black cat ran across the yard.
   Running across the yard was the big black cat.
   There has been a big, black cat running across the yard.
   Is the big, black cat running across the yard?

   Have the class use additional sentences to show variety in sentence structure. Stress this in all written expression.

5. Students should discriminate between sentences, fragments, and run-ons. On the board list several examples of all three. Allow students to discover why some are sentences and others are not. Make complete sentences from the fragments and write two or more sentences from the run-ons. Show for effect when fragments are correct.

   Arrange four pictures on the bulletin board with a sentence written under each one,using the four types of sentences. Have students change sentences each day.

6. Show students that the context controls the meaning. Discuss denotative and connotative meanings of words. Show how words change the meaning of sentences and paragraphs. Have the students write a par-

agraph using words that limit the meaning to the denotative meaning and then rewrite it using as many connotative words as possible.

7. Write a sentence on the board using words such as great, swell, nice, and terrific. Discuss words that give an exact, vivid picture. Rewrite the sentence. Remind the students to be specific in word choices for all written expression.

8. Encourage students to keep a list of words in their folder or notebook that have been misspelled in compositions. Once a month review these words and have students write sentences using the words in different contexts.

9. Use the bulletin board to explain the parts of speech. Change the display often. Circle examples of good descriptive words in compositions and include these as part of the bulletin board display. Good suggestions for bulletin boards can be found in English textbooks where pictures and illustrations are used along with examples of parts of speech. Students, also, have many valuable suggestions for displays.

10. Read aloud to your students model paragraphs in available texts, library books, and especially from good compositions you have saved from former students. Discuss them with your class.

11. Use the opaque projector to show compositions the class has done. Have students comment on them. Try not to show the student's name, even though handwriting may give him away. If you use the overhead projector you can make corrections on the paper as students make comments and suggestions. Perhaps you will mimeograph a composition to have students make corrections on the paper as the class discusses it.

12. Have the class analyze together the incidents that might be used in a paragraph about an exciting event, a frightening experience, or other memorable occasion. List on the chalkboard several orders (arrangements) in which the incidents might be presented, and decide which order would be really the most effective.

13. Have the students use a variety of transitional words and phrases to control order of time. Examples: first, next, later, afterwards, in the meantime, meanwhile, soon, earlier, immediately, and the following day. Have students write a paragraph using a different transitional word in each sentence. For a longer assignment have students use a good transitional word or words in the first sentence of each new paragraph.

14. Read to the class a paragraph written by a student and have the class decide on a suitable title. Then allow students time to write a title for a paragraph they'd like to write, keeping in mind that the

title which suggests what the paragraph, or story, is about is usually short. Have students select other titles during the school year to use in topic sentences or paragraphs.

D. WE WANT CHILDREN TO JUDGE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WRITTEN PRODUCT.

When the child works out a procedure for organizing and expressing his ideas both before and during writing, feels the magic of words through his word choice, senses the power of effective word order, he further develops skills in actual writing by judging effectiveness of his written product. A small child might unknowingly judge effectiveness by saying, "Yes, this is the way I want to say it." In a few years the same child may say, "I enjoyed writing this poem because it's been on my mind for a long time. I wanted to see if I could express the feeling of love that a mother might have for a new baby." By the time this person is in the upper elementary grades, he might express his reaction this way, "This year I have been having difficulty with sticking to one main idea in a paragraph. I decided to jot down all the things I wanted to say in a paragraph. Then I selected those ideas that pertained to one central idea. When I wrote the paragraph using a topic sentence along with the other sentences made from ideas referring to the central idea, I knew that I had finally understood how to construct a good paragraph. Now my next problem will be to improve on transitions."

Some products of written expression need be evaluated only by the student himself. Perhaps his classmates will assist in examining the written work more carefully. Some ways teachers can judge the effectiveness of the written product are by reading compositions in class, judging areas where students need help, refining the thinking, directing and guiding the proofreading, and putting comments in place of or in addition to grades when evaluating children's writing. Teachers of all subjects, principals, and parents are also important in encouraging effective written expression, and their writing should serve as models for children.

The *General Curriculum Outline, Grades Kindergarten through Eight*, prepared under the direction of the Santa Clara County Superintendent of Schools and approved by the Santa Clara County Board of Education, is an overview of the content of the major subject areas for grades Kindergarten through Eight. Page 25 of the outline "indicates the broad areas of study to be introduced at each grade level (English, Oral and Written). It is based on the 1951 Santa Clara County teachers' guide. Grade placement of subject matter is intended to meet the needs of the average pupil, and should be modified as appropriate for each class and school district."

As a further explanation, page 26 of the outline states: "The point where the 'X' occurs for each activity or skill indicates the grade at which first emphasis should be given. The continuation of the 'X' signifies that the ability is to be maintained and developed through the grades in which it appears." Many of the activities and skills listed on pages 26-29 are introduced one or two grades earlier than indicated on the chart in the Los Altos School District.

Keeping in mind that skills in using effective word order are refined as the *individual* child progresses from kindergarten through the eighth grade, *the teacher* is aware that skills must be reemphasized, maintained, and developed.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades K, 1, and 2

1. Help the child evaluate his work by asking:

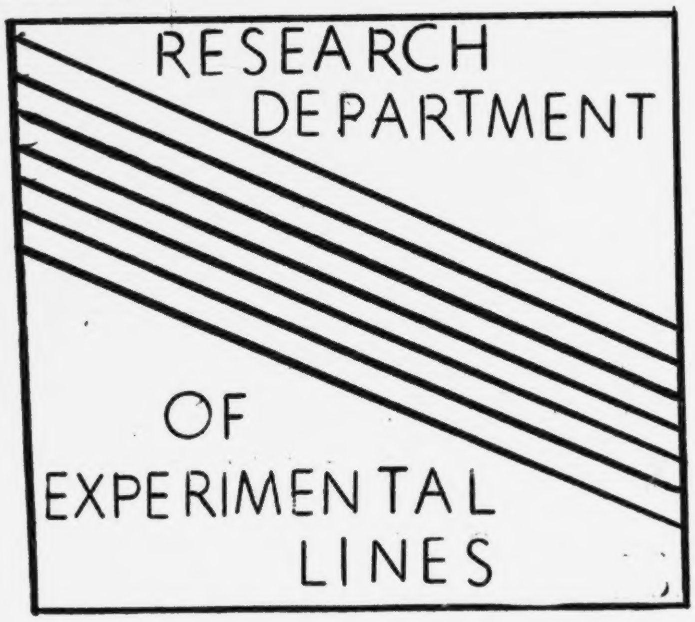
   Is this the way you want to say it?
   Do you like what you said?
   Do you like the way you said it?
   Have you told your story in the right order?
   Have you said all you wanted to say?
   Is there anything you'd like to change?

2. Help children evaluate each other's work by asking:

   What did you like best about John's story?
   Could John improve his story in any way?
   How could he improve?

3. The teacher should encourage parents to look for things which are praiseworthy in children's writing.

4. Have a section of the bulletin board for children's work. Once a week or month, have one of the stories or poems selected as "Our Best" or "We Like This."



FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. Have the children proofread their completed written product and evaluate their own work first. Some place in your classroom, or perhaps included in the child's individual folder, should be a check list of growing standards for him to follow.

2. If the children are willing, have them exchange their papers for student reading and evaluation.

3. Another evaluation could be the teacher's. A written grade is not always necessary if the teacher has time to make constructive remarks and confer occasionally with the child. About the red pencil, Mauree Applegate says, "Language arts teachers have used the red pencil scalpel for years, and too many of the patients died in the chair or have never wakened from the anesthetic."

4. Encourage the class to be a responsive, sympathetic audience. Set up standards for positive, constructive evaluation. What did you like about John's work? Then, What can he do to make it even better? A child's confidence in himself may be destroyed by negative criticism. Put down the children's suggestions for standards and then edit and revise them for charts to be used and followed in the classroom. Use these standards charts for different patterns of writing (letters, reports, paragraph writing) so that children can refer to them as they write and in their subsequent evaluation of their work.

5. Keep a file of each child's work. Occasionally have him select the best from what he has written for recopying, after the teacher has helped him to see how he can improve his organization and mechanics.

6. Give children opportunities to look over each other's work to check ideas, form, or mechanics.

7. Have contests with work judged outstanding rewarded by special seals, place of honor on bulletin board, addition to class poetry or story collection, or publication in school or local newspaper. Check Palo Alto Times' "Youth Said It" column.

8. Have children select the best written work done during any reading, social studies, or science unit for its culmination activity or program.

9. Keep an individual file of each child's work. Use this file for reference in judging areas where he needs additional instruction in

certain skills. Make a check list of skills one or more children have not mastered and work with them in small groups on these specific skills.

10. Put comments, in place of or in addition to grades, when evaluating children's writing. Try to keep them specific and encouraging. If a grading stamp is used, give ideas priority over mechanics.

11. Direct and guide the proofreading of the children's work by asking questions that will challenge them to examine their written work more carefully. For example, use an opaque projector for children to see more clearly samples of their own and others' work. During this time, the children might look at the enlarged work, while the teacher calls attention to their paragraph indentation, capitalization in title, or the main idea of a paragraph.

mind that the greatest value in such an experience is not to the writer of the composition but to the class in learning to evaluate written composition.

11. Use bulletin boards to show students' work. Change them often. Select one for the "Blue Ribbon" award once or twice a month. Display compositions that illustrate certain rules of grammar used correctly that the class has been trying to improve.

12. Each student should have a check list of standards that he should use in evaluating his work. Reviewing this once or twice a month will make students more aware of their individual problems in writing.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. Have individual writing folders. Let the students write as often as they like or have time to, and file their papers in their folders. Let the student select one composition over a two or three week period to be edited and finished in a completed copy for evaluation by himself and his teacher. While the class is writing the teacher should have two students at his desk; one is discussing the paper while the other child is waiting for the first to finish. This is recommended as one procedure for evaluating a composition.

2. Have students read compositions by other students in the class. Let them place penciled suggestions and comments at the bottom of the paper or on another sheet of paper.

3. Hand a set of papers to another class to be read, or to another teacher for him to distribute to his class. Comments could be attached to the papers.

4. Occasionally the teacher might read papers to note where students as a class are having difficulty with mechanics. By using the opaque projector the group can see what students are writing and what common problems they have.

5. Let the principal look at a set of papers for his evaluation. He might send a note or letter to the class, or could talk with the class about their writing. He could read several of the papers to the class.

6. Have the students let parents read compositions for their comments. Have them be more aware of what is being written than how to correct grammatical errors.

7. Have students discuss their procedure for organizing and expressing their ideas both before and during writing. Find out what suggestions they have for improving their work.

8. Let students tape their stories and poems for the class to hear.

9. Select some of the compositions for publication in the school newspaper or local newspaper. "Youth Said It" column of the Palo Alto Times also invites student articles for publication.

10. Mimeograph a composition for the class to read and discuss. What do you like about the selection? Is it well written? How would you improve it? Is it legible? Is the person concerned with good grammar? How could the story have better continuity? Have the class actually judge the effectiveness of the written product. Keep in

WHAT OTHER IDEAS HAVE YOU TRIED?

IV. WE WANT CHILDREN TO DEVELOP APPLICATIONS OF WRITTEN EXPRESSION TO DAILY LIVING

A. WE WANT CHILDREN TO DEVELOP APPLICATIONS OF WRITTEN EXPRESSION TO SCHOOL SUBJECTS.

B. WE WANT CHILDREN TO DEVELOP APPLICATIONS OF WRITTEN EXPRESSION TO OUT-OF-SCHOOL SITUATIONS.

A. WE WANT CHILDREN TO DEVELOP APPLICATIONS OF WRITTEN EXPRESSION TO SCHOOL SITUATIONS

Students should develop applications of written expression to all school situations and not solely to one class or the classroom where that particular class is held. Teachers should help instill this into the thinking of his children. We want children to apply effective written expression to all subjects and all activities that are a part of the school program.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades K, 1, and 2

1. Have children arrange a display advertising the school lunch menu.
2. Representatives of the student government might write a few notes of the meeting to be taken back to the classroom.
3. Discuss with the children what opportunities they have at home to write. Do they write telephone messages? Do they make lists of things to remember?
4. Children can do special projects for holidays or the seasons to be presented to the class or school assembly.
5. Discuss with the children the importance of using written expression effectively in all school situations.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. Children may want to write advertisements and draw posters for money-raising projects, such as a P.T.A. juice bar sale or school bazaar.

2. Have the children assemble material for a school magazine. After an editor and several assistants have been selected, have them gather stories, poems, and news items from student contributions. These items may be proofread by the teacher and several children. The school secretary, a parent, or perhaps one of the children, might type and ditto the magazine for distribution among the students.

3. Have a school contest for best poetry and short story. Select one a week or month for newspaper publication or public address system presentation.

4. Students might arrange a display advertising the school lunch menus, correlating this with the science unit on nutrition.

5. In science, children have an opportunity for writing when watching Science Far and Near TV program. Children should learn to take good notes. Here is a chance for them to learn to listen and grasp the main idea. Later these notes can be organized to become the first step in a completed report or evaluation of the program.

6. In arithmetic children can be asked to write story problems to cover concepts recently learned.

7. Children can be given opportunities in music and art to observe, listen, and write evaluations or descriptions of the material presented.

8. Teachers might consider creative dramatics as one area where children can experience writing with freedom and imagination for plays, pantomime directions, and puppet shows.

9. Representatives of student government should have an opportunity to record information in general meetings and to report to the classroom. The student council secretary, in addition to class representative reports, might send a copy of the minutes to each class for posting.

10. Holidays offer an excellent opportunity for children to organize, write creatively, and present their work to an audience. A well-planned creative program with children participating is a wonderful

opportunity for them to express themselves and be part of something "special" that they will remember for a long time.

11. Assign a class secretary to write a few notes each day for each subject. These could be reviewed the following day, at the end of each week, or as a review of each unit of work.

12. Have children listen to recordings of tone poem music or music related to the writing theme to inspire students before and during their actual writing.

13. Discuss with children the importance of using effective written expression to all school situations.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. Encourage children to keep all their sensitivities alert to their environment. Discuss with them formally and informally what they have seen, how they felt about what they saw, what they have heard.

2. Children might keep a handy pad and pencil in convenient places around the house, or in a pocket or purse in school, to jot down ideas when they are fresh in their minds.

3. The teacher may prepare a list of authors who live in this locality. Ask some of these people to visit your class to talk with the children about how they were inspired to write and what methods they used to get their ideas on paper. Also, illustrators might discuss how they prepared their drawings in terms of color, syle, and suitability to text. From such exposure to successful writers and illustrators children can be motivated to learn to put their best writing into manuscript form and submit it to various publications, such as newspapers and children's magazines.

4. Students might take notes about field trips in science and social studies to be used in class discussions and committee work. Observations on such trips can be organized into an outline and then expanded into research talks and reports in the classroom. In committee work one child might be selected as secretary to keep a record of committee plans and activities.

5. In science, students may take notes for TV science programs. They could draw charts to show steps in experiments and problem solving. Unit research projects and individual notebooks can show productive thinking as a part of written expression. Students may also take notes on individual experiments made at home.

6. Ask students to write poems, captions, and stories from the drawings and objects they have produced during art class. Using their sensory perceptions in an artistic effort is good experience in creative writing. Reverse the order by having students make their drawings first and then write a composition about the sketch.

7. Having children listen to records, tone poem music, or music related to the writing theme, can inspire children before and during their actual writing.

8. Assign a class secretary to write notes each day. The following day have him read the notes to the class. Have a class binder where notes and assignments can be written. These can be used for review or for students who have been absent from school.

9. When children are absent from school it is suggested that friends write the assignments for them. The teacher may want to check the notes for accuracy.

10. Discuss with students the importance of applying effective written expression for all school and out-of-school situations.

B. WE WANT CHILDREN TO DEVELOP APPLICATIONS OF WRITTEN EXPRESSION TO OUT-OF-SCHOOL SITUATIONS.

Applications of written expression should be developed by children not only to school situations but also to out-of-school situations. Teachers and parents should help instill this into the thinking of their children. We want our children to apply effective written expression to all out-of-school areas, whether it be personal writing at home or for social or religious organizations in the community.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades K, 1, and 2

1. Teachers can plant the idea that school is not the only place for writing opportunities. Children might get together in their own neighborhoods to play school. Here they might repeat certain activities they have performed in school or experiment with their own ideas.

2. Children may write postcards and letters when they take trips.

3. Encourage children to write their own party invitations. Their parents can help them to plan the invitations, and they can write and address them.

4. Give the child responsibility for taking telephone messages and writing them.

FREEWAY
UNDER
CONSTRUCTION

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 3, 4, and 5

1. If children mention that they do not have paper at home for writing purposes, the teacher might staple together blank sheets of paper in booklets to be used at home by them.

2. Children might keep a daily or weekly reminder in which they jot down memos of activities.

3. Encourage children to join pen-pal clubs or write to their friends in other localities or countries.

4. Suggest to students that they write notes to friends and leave them in unusual places, such as a tree hollow, under a stone, or pinned to the gang clubhouse door.

5. Encourage children to collect best stories, poems, and jokes from children's magazines to be pasted into a scrapbook.

6. Suggest to the children occasions at home that offer opportunities for them to write. Ask a few of these questions:

   Do you take written telephone messages in your home? What information do you put down?
   Do you write thank-you notes when you receive gifts from people out of town?
   Do you leave written messages for your mother when you are going some place and she is not at home?
   Do you keep a diary?
   Do you often write down a plan of what you are going to do for the day?
   Do you make lists or notes of things to remember?
   What groups do you belong to that offer opportunities to write?
   What kind of writing could you do for these groups?
   If you belong to a church organization, what writing opportunities are there in your group?
   What other occasions can you recall in which you might have opportunities to write that we have not mentioned?

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU TRIED THIS? Grades 6, 7, and 8

1. Encourage children to carry a pad and pencil with them for jotting observations or ideas that occur to them on walks, bike rides, or family outings. They can also jot down rhymes or interesting ways of saying or describing things that they think of or hear.

2. At home, children should get into the habit of recording lists and messages for the family. They can write telephone messages, make shopping lists, and help prepare shopping lists.

3. Children can collect in a scrapbook the best stories, jokes, riddles, and poems that they read in magazines, comic books, and other children's literature.

4. Home bulletin boards might serve for the entire family by posting stories and articles of interest to everyone.

5. To stimulate children's writing development have a sketch pad at home to encourage drawings and illustrations for written expression projects.

6. There are many occasions to apply written expression to out-of-school situations. The teacher might ask his students such questions as:

   Do you write a plan of what you are going to study today? or this week?
   If you belong to a church group, what writing opportunities are there?
   Do you record telephone messages in your home? What information do you write?
   What other occasions can you recall in which you might have opportunities to write that we have not mentioned.

7. Ecnourage diary keeping by reading to students excerpts from autobiographies about some of their heroes. Discuss having the diaries by their beds and getting the habit of jotting down their thoughts or daily activities just before getting up or going to sleep.

REFERENCES

Many references were used in the preparation of this Guide. However, those listed below have been found especially useful to the teaching in planning daily writing experiences for children, and each of these is readily available in each school in the district.

Applegate, Mauree, Easy in English, 1960.

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